A U M

The nature of action, of forbidden action and of inaction must be well learned. The path of action is obscure and difficult to discern.

Renunciation of and devotion through works, are both means of final emancipation. But of these two, devotion through works is more highly to be esteemed than the renunciation of them.—*Bhagavad-Gita,* Chs. 4 and 5.

THEOSOPHY

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MASTERS AND THEIR MESSAGE

SOME CHAPTERS FROM THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY.

THE FAILURE OF THE SOCIETY

THE life of altruism is not so much a high ideal as a matter of practice. Therefore it is that the Ethics of Theosophy are even more necessary to mankind than the scientific aspects of the psychic facts of nature and man.

The Society must grow proportionately, and not Too *rapidly. Once before was growth checked in connection with the psychic phenomena, and there may yet come a time when the moral and ethical foundations of the Society may be wrecked in a similar way. What can be done to prevent such a thing is for each Fellow of the Society to make Theosophy a vital factor in their lives—to make it real, to weld its principles firmly into their lives—in short to make it their own and treat the Theosophical Society as if it were themselves. Following closely on this is the necessity for Solidarity among the Fellows of the Society; the acquisition of such a feeling of identity with each and all of our Brothers that an attack upon one is an attack upon all.*

We need all our strength to meet the difficulties and dangers which surround us. We have external enemies to fight in the shape of materialism, prejudice and obstinacy: the enemies in the shape of custom and religious forms; enemies too numerous to mention, but nearly as thick as the sand-clouds which are raised by the blasting Sirocco of the desert. Do we not need our strength against these foes? Yet, again, there are more insidious foes, who "take our name in vain," and who make Theosophy a by-word in the

mouths of men and the Theosophical Society a mark at which to throw mud. They slander Theosophists and Theosophy, and convert the moral Ethics into a cloak to conceal their own selfish objects. And as if this were not sufficient, there are the worst foes of all—those of a man's own household—Theosophists who are unfaithful both to the Society and to themselves. Thus indeed we are in the midst of foes.

*The experiments made in Hypnotism and Mesmerism at the present time are experiments of unconscious, when not of conscious, Black Magic. The road is wide and broad which leads to such destruction; and it is but too easy to find; and only too many go ignorantly along it to their own destruction. But the practical cure for it lies in one thing. That is the course of study which I mentioned before. It sounds very simple, but is eminently difficult; for that cure is "*ALTRUISM.*" And this is the key-note of Theosophy and the cure for all ills; this it is which the real founders of the Theosophical Society promote as its first object—*UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Thus, even if only in name a body of Altruists, the Theosophical Society has to fight all who under its cover seek to obtain magical powers to use for their own selfish ends and to the hurt of others. Many are those who joined our Society for no other purpose than curiosity. Psychological phenomena were what they sought, and they were unwilling to yield one iota of their own pleasures and habits to obtain them. These very quickly went away empty-handed. The Theosophical Society has never been and never will be a school of promiscuous Theurgic rites. But there are dozens of small occult societies which talk very glibly of Magic, Occultism, Rosicrucians, Adepts, etc. These profess much, even to giving the key to the Universe, but end by leading men to a blank wall instead of to the "Door of the Mysteries." Under cover of the philosophy of the Wisdom-Religion they manage to get up a mystical jargon which for the time is effective and enables them, by the aid of a very small amount of clairvoyance, to fleece the mystically inclined but ignorant aspirants to the occult, and lead them like sheep in any direction. But woe to those who try to convert a noble philosophy into a den for disgusting immorality, greediness for selfish power, and money-making under the cloak of Theosophy. Karma reaches them when least expected.

But our union is, and ever will be, our strength, if we preserve our ideal of Universal Brotherhood. It is the old "in hoc signo vinces," which should be our watchword, for it is under its sacred flag that we shall conquer.

"How many of you have helped humanity to carry its smallest burden, that you should all regard yourselves as Theosophists? Oh, men of the West, who would play at being the Saviours of mankind, before they even spare the life of a mosquito whose sting threatens them! would you be partakers of Divine Wisdom or true Theos-

ophists? Then do as the gods when incarnated do. Feel yourselves the vehicles of the whole humanity, mankind as part of yourselves, and act accordingly."

H. P. Blavatsky . . , April 7, 1889.
Letter to the Third American Convention.

In former articles we have tried to indicate in some degree the effect produced upon the mind and ideas of the race by the injection of the broad outlines of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, through the publication of *Isis Unveiled* in the autumn of 1878, followed by the founding of *The Theosophist* in India in 1879, *The Path* at New York in 1886, and *Lucifer* in London in 1887. The *Secret Doctrine*, the *Key to Theosophy*, and the *Voice of the Silence* followed in 1888-1889.

Madame Blavatsky came to New York in 1874 and the same year met Col. Olcott and William Q. Judge. The Theosophical Society was established by them in 1875, with its three objects and its three sections, the third section of which in its turn consisted of three classes. Anyone soever who would signify assent to the three objects and work to any extent for any of them was eligible to the "active" class of the third section and all such were to be "grouped in degrees according to merit." The other classes were to consist of "Corresponding" and "Honorary" members. The third section was probationary until their purpose to remain in the Society became fixed, their usefulness shown, their ability to conquer evil habits and unwarrantable prejudices demonstrated.

The second section was to consist of those who proved by fidelity, zeal, and courage, and their devotion to the Society, that they had become able to regard all men as equally their brothers, irrespective of caste, colour, race, or creed; and who "are ready to defend the life or honour of a brother Theosophist even at the risk of their own lives."

The first section was to be "composed exclusively of proficients or initiates in Esoteric Science and Philosophy, who take a deep interest in the Society's affairs and instruct the President-Founder how best to regulate them, but whom, none but such as they voluntarily communicate with, have the right to know."

It was significantly stated (*Theosophist*, April, 1880.): "The administration of the superior Sections need not be dealt with at present in a code of rules laid before the public. No responsibilities, connected with these superior grades, are incurred by persons who merely desire ordinary membership of the third class." The further significant statement was made: "Advancement from Section to Section depends upon merit only. Until a Fellow reaches the first degree of the Second Section, his Fellowship gives him but the following rights:" these being enumerated as the privilege of attendance at meetings; access only to printed literature; help in

case of need and according to personal merit; instruction and enlightenment in his reading and studies by Fellows of the Second Section.

The growth of the Society—that is to say, of the Third Section—has been noted. What of its probation? The world was ploughed by the mighty currents set in motion by H. P. B., and from the standpoint of the philosophy She promulgated, and the Objects She embodied in herself and caused to be set forth in the Theosophical Society, the membership of that Society represented the possibilities of the race as soil for the sowing, the germination, and the growth of the seed She brought.

The Second Section of the Society was brought to *public* notice only in October, 1888, by the publication in *Lucifer* of that date of the following, under the caption of "The Esoteric Section of The Theosophical Society:"

"Owing to the fact that a large number of Fellows of the Society have felt the necessity for the formation of a body of Esoteric students, to be organised on the ORIGINAL LINES devised by the *real* founders of the T. S., the following order has been issued by the President-Founder:—

I. To promote the esoteric interests of the Theosophical Society by the deeper study of esoteric philosophy, there is hereby organised a body, to be known as the "Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society."

II. The constitution and sole direction of the same is vested in Madame H. P. Blavatsky as its Head; she is solely responsible to the Members for results; and the section has no official or corporate connection with the Exoteric Society save in the person of the President-Founder.

III. Persons wishing to join the Section, and willing to abide by its rules, should communicate directly with:—Mme. H. P. BLAVATSKY, 17 Lansdowne Road, Holland Park, London, W.

(Signed) H. S. OLCOTT,
President in Council.

Attest:—H. P. BLAVATSKY.

The same number of *Lucifer* which contained the foregoing announcement also contained two other articles of the gravest import, to-wit: "Lodges of Magic," and "To Theosophists." The first of these was reprinted in "THEOSOPHY" for March, 1913. And under the caption of "A Master's Letter," there was reprinted in "THEOSOPHY" for September, 1913, a portion of the article, "To Theosophists." To those who can apply the fundamental principles of Theosophy, and who have at all grasped the mission and nature of H. P. Blavatsky, it is clear that, like the other writings of both Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge, these articles indicate a knowl-

edge of the past, an application to the then present, and a prescience as to the future. The citations and quotations with which the writings of Madame Blavatsky are sown were and are known to many. She alone was able to point out their meaning—that they everywhere indicated the existence of a body of knowledge which She named Theosophy; and the existence of the custodians of that knowledge, whom She named the Masters. In the same way, her many articles written directly for the members of the Society and for the elect among them, were read and only their application to the immediate matter at hand were in any way recognized by the students. Their larger status, their universal scope of judgment, of applicability, of predication and prediction, were not seen, not credited. Then as now the students, sure of nothing else, were sure of their own powers of discrimination. What they did not see could not exist. Then as now existed the same curiosity, the same thirst, for more "instructions," more "messages," more "information." What was written yesterday could only apply to yesterday. What was said to this one could only be a "favor" to him and have no larger meaning. What was written of tomorrow could only be a guess, a surmise, a threat. Scarcely was there one who could grasp that H. P. B. was working in the present for the future, that her nature was universal as her Message, that in everything She wrote, as in everything She did, She was *laying down the lines of force for a hundred years.*

In the winter of 1888-89 H. P. B. addressed herself publicly, as always, to the reiteration of the great basic fundamentals of Theosophy, of the existence of Masters, of the larger evolution of Humanity; hanging her statements and her arguments, her citations and her appeals, on every subject and event that excited for the moment the attention of the race. In the same way her writings for the Society were conveniently hooked to every dissension, every ambition, every dispute, every brave effort, every earnest aspiration, every least service rendered, every least progress achieved.

To the newly-forming Esoteric Section she addressed, amongst other writings, two Preliminary Memorandums. From the first of these a clear statement is taken showing the result of weighing in the balance the Theosophical Society as a whole through fourteen years of probation:

"At this stage it is perhaps better that the applicants should learn the reason for the formation of this Section, and what it is expected to achieve.

"The Theosophical Society had just entered upon the fourteenth year of its existence; and if it had accomplished great, one may almost say stupendous, results on the exoteric and utilitarian plane, it had proved a dead failure on all those points which rank foremost among the objects of its original establishment. Thus, as a 'Universal Brotherhood,' or even as a fraternity, one among many, it

had descended to the level of all those societies whose pretensions are great, but whose names are simply masks—nay, even Shams. Nor can the excuse be pleaded that it was led into such an undignified course owing to its having been impeded in its natural development, and almost extinguished, by reason of the conspiracies of its enemies *openly* begun in 1884. Because even before that date there never was that solidarity in the ranks of our Society which would not only enable it to resist all external attacks, but also make it possible for greater, wider, and more tangible help to be given to all its members by those who are always ready to give help when we are fit to receive it. When trouble arose too many were quick to doubt and despair, and few indeed were they who had worked for the Cause and not for themselves. The attacks of the enemy have given the Society some discretion in the conduct of its external progress, but its real internal condition has not improved, and the members, in their efforts toward spiritual culture still require that help which solidarity in the ranks can alone give them the right to ask. The Masters can give but little assistance to a Body not thoroughly united in purpose and feeling, and which breaks its first fundamental rule—universal brotherly love, without distinction of race, creed, colour or caste, *i. e.*, the social distinctions made in the world; nor to a Society, many members of which pass their lives in judging, condemning, and often reviling other members in a most untheosophical, not to say disgraceful, manner.

"For this reason it was decided to gather the 'elect' of the T. S. and to call them to action. It is only by a select group of brave souls, a handful of determined men and women hungry for genuine spiritual development and the acquirement of soul-wisdom, that the Theosophical Society at large can be brought back to its original lines. It is through an Esoteric Section alone—*i. e.*, a group in which all the members, even if unacquainted with one another, work for each other, and by working for all work for themselves—that the great Exoteric Society may be redeemed and made to realize that in union and harmony alone lie its strength and power. The object of this Section, then, is to help the future growth of the Theosophical Society as a whole in the true direction, by promoting brotherly union at least among a choice minority.

"All know that this end was in view when the Society was established, and even in its mere unpledged ranks there was a possibility of development and knowledge, until it began to show want of real union; and now it must be saved from future dangers by the united aim, brotherly feeling, and constant exertions of the members of this Esoteric Section. Once offered the grand example of practical altruism, of the noble lives of those who learn to master the great knowledge but to help others, and who strive to acquire powers but to place them at the service of their fellow-men, the whole Theosophical community may yet be steered into action, and led to follow the example set before them."

The Second Preliminary Memorandum contained a definition of the relation between the Teacher and the pupil, and the limitations and responsibilities of each, in these words:

"*'If thou canst not fulfil thy pledge, refuse to take it; but once thou hast bound thyself to any promise, carry it out, even if thou hast to die for it.'*

"Membership in the E. S., and 'pledges' sent, signed and accepted, are no warrants for a high success, nor do these pledges aim at making of every student an adept or magician. They are simply the seeds in which lurks the potentiality of every truth, the germ of that progress which will be the heirloom of only the seventh *perfect* Race. A handful of such seeds has been entrusted to me by the keepers of these truths, and it is my duty to sow them there where I perceive the possibility of growth. It is the parable of the Sower put once more into practice, and a fresh lesson to be derived from its new application. The seed that falls into good ground will bring forth fruit an hundredfold, and thus repay in each case the waste of those seeds which will have fallen by the wayside, on stony hearts and among the thorns of human passions. It is the duty of the Sower to choose the best soil for the future crops. But he is held responsible only so far as that ability is directly connected with the failures, and for such as are solely due to it; it is the Karma of the individuals who receive the seeds by asking for them, that will repay or punish those who fail in *their* duties to their Higher Self."

From the human standpoint the Theosophical Society had achieved a great, an unique success. In fourteen years it had covered the world with its organization and efforts. It numbered in its membership representative men and women of all nationalities, all creeds, sects and parties. It had survived the bitterest assaults, the sneers and jeers and calumnies of every opposing force, of every entrenched and vested interest.

From the standpoint of its most active members, an assured position had been reached and a peaceful conquest of the world was in sight. From an insignificant, helpless beginning, unnoticed where it had not been despised, it was now an object of attention in the most dignified quarters, and regarded by its strongest enemies as their most formidable adversary. It was more than popular, it was of supreme interest wherever promulgated. What remained but to continue the sowing and the harvesting, with ever-increasing ease in a world-field daily becoming more fertile?

From the standpoint of the Masters, of the Messenger, and of the Philosophy which They embodied, the Theosophical Society had "*proved a dead failure* on all those points which rank foremost among the objects of its original establishment." As a Universal Brotherhood it was simply a sham. Its members had worked for themselves and not for the Cause. The Masters were able to give

it but little help because it had broken its first fundamental rule, universal brotherly love. The members needed that help in their efforts toward spiritual culture which solidarity alone could give them the *right to ask*. So the "elect" of the Society were to be called to action, in an essay to restore the Society to its original line; an effort to sift from among the many members of the "third section" a handful of determined men and women, "a group of brave souls," in which all the members would work for each other and work for themselves only in working for all: would make Theosophy a "vital factor in their lives;" would *practice* the Ethics, and forego hypnotism, mesmerism, psychic phenomena, lest there "come a time when the moral and ethical foundations of the Society may be wrecked."

The parable of the Sower!

The Philosophy had been given to the Society, and through it, to the world. The world was satisfied with its understanding, the Society satisfied with its understanding and application. The Sower pronounced both the understanding and the application a *dead failure,* and prepared for a fresh lesson and a new application, through the formation of a tentative degree of the Second Section. Out of the corpse of the Theosophical Society a new body was to be formed, a new incarnation of a vehicle for the Message and the Work of the Masters. With that effort we shall attempt to deal in due course.

With the Message imparted to show what should have been done by the students; with the judgment pronounced to show what had been done in fourteen years by these students: with these as our basis, let us see, if we can, what were the *points of departure* from the *lines laid down* that in fourteen brief years led the students as a body into the morass of sham, failure, and the breaking of that pledged Object to "found a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of Humanity;" instead of to that "wonder and miracle truly, for the realization of which Humanity has been vainly waiting for the last 18 centuries, and which every association has hitherto failed to accomplish—namely, to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love and bent on a pure altruistic work, not on a labor with selfish motives"—which She said was the most holy and important mission of Theosophy and of the most vital importance in the Society, "inasmuch as it alone can furnish the beacon-light needed to guide humanity on its true path."

The Message was imparted as "the fruit of a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern adepts and study of their science;" was "offered to such as are willing to accept truth wherever it may be found, and to *defend* it, even looking popular prejudice straight in the face;" was "an attempt to aid the student to detect the *vital principles* which underlie the philosophical systems of old;" was to destroy the "authoritative character of science, theology, every human hypothesis and conception born of imperfect knowledge;" was an appeal to a "faculty of perception growing in man, enabling

him to descry facts and truths beyond our ordinary ken;" was to convey the "assurance that the Oriental philosophy has room for no other faith than an absolute and immovable faith in the omnipotence of man's own immortal self;" was a "plea for the recognition of the anciently universal Wisdom-Religion, as the only possible key to the Absolute in science and theology."

The students admitted the *facts* but failed to recognize their import. They failed to recognize the vital principles underlying the religious and philosophical systems of old, but busied themselves in the study of comparative religion and philosophy.

They busied themselves in efforts to explore the new fields of sensation and experience, instead of employing their growing faculty of perception in the assimilation of the Message and in the practice of its Ethics; in enlarging their information regarding human hypothesis and conception born of imperfect knowledge, instead of in uprooting in themselves and in others the authoritative character of racial and therefore individual ideas as to science and theology.

They gave their entire allegiance and energy to some form of exploitation under the Second and Third Objects of the Society, and failed utterly to grasp the essential significance and bearing of the First Object upon their studies, understanding, and efforts of every kind.

They basically misunderstood the purpose of the Masters, the direct and instant bearing of Their Message upon the daily lives of the students. Their daily lives, their daily thoughts, their daily acts, were *selfish*. With no change in their attitude, their motives, in eating and drinking, in working and playing, in learning and teaching, in living and dying, the students necessarily received and studied the Message of the Masters in the same spirit that governed their own daily existence no less than the ordinary life of the world. One and all the effort was to assimilate as much of the philosophy and its benefits to themselves as possible, with scarce a thought of assimilating themselves to the philosophy, of making Theosophy a living power in *their* lives, of doing all in their power by study and otherwise to fit themselves to be the better able to *help and teach others*. Yet is it not all too clear that unless this were seen and recognized by the students as the all-essential pre-requisite to any real comprehension on their own part, the individual no less than the Society was foredoomed—self-doomed—to failure? Their efforts, if "successful" could but lead to the infliction upon Humanity of a new theology miscalled religion, with themselves as the sacerdotal order. The Masters, surely, were not distributing either rewards or favors to the students or to the world in the re-presentation of the Wisdom-Religion. The students, surely, were not employés, who had but to perform their allotted tasks to receive and enjoy their wages.

Just as there was a basic misconception of the nature of the Masters and of the Message, so was there a basic misconception in

regard to H. P. B. and the Society. None recognized Theosophy as verily the anciently universal *Wisdom-Religion,* and set themselves to live and act on that recognition. None recognized the Masters as not separate and apart from Humanity, and as taking an active part in the governance of things. None recognized that the daily events of life are also "psychic and spiritual phenomena" whose meaning is to be understood. None recognized that the presence of H. P. B. and Her Message in the world was the superphenomenon of the ages; that what She wrote was the Voice of the Master in the world of men; that She *was* the Master in human guise and garment, as Her words were the Master's Message in human form and speech. They could not recognize the vowels because of the consonants, the substance because of the form, and what She employed as means and symbols they treated as formulae and end. Hence to the Society and to its members, Theosophy and H. P. B. were problems which *they* were to solve, whereas if Theosophy be accepted as truth, Humanity is the problem to be solved by Theosophy and the Society and its members the possible instruments to be employed in that solution, and H. P. B. the guide, the teacher and the friend, of all who would essay to learn.

A quarter of a century has gone by since the period of which we write. The things of which H. P. B. warned are in full flower; a world at disastrous war, its "christian" nations for the most part endeavoring to exterminate each other, and those not engaged in the art of destruction endeavoring to profit by supplying the means to those who are, and all alike calling upon the same "god:" the "theosophical" society in its discordant and dissevered fragments engaged in disastrous war, and those "theosophists" not allied with one or another of the combatants seeking their personal peace, safety and profit—and all alike calling upon the same "masters," and using the same weapons of exclusiveness and exclusion, of claim and counter-claim.

Is it not time for Theosophists, wherever and however situated, to return to the point of departure? to go back to the great Source, to return to the study of the writings and the work of H. P. Blavatsky, to follow the lines laid down by Her? to apply the principles She promulgated to our present situation, individually and collectively? to endeavor to ascertain what She presented, what She represented, and when ascertained, study the events of the last forty years within and without the Theosophical area and make a fresh application of the lessons learned?

"Experience but too clearly proves that any departure from the time-honoured rules for the government and instruction of the disciples to suit Western customs and prejudices, is a fatal policy.

"Before the pupil can be taught, he must learn how to conduct himself as regards the world, his teacher, the sacred science, and his Inner Self.

"So Long as There Are Three Men Worthy of Our Lord's Blessing in the Theosophical Society—It Can Never Be Destroyed.

"To the earnest Disciple his Teacher takes the place of Father and Mother. For, whereas they give him his body and its faculties, its life and casual form, the Teacher shows him how to develope the inner faculties for the acquisition of the Eternal Wisdom.

"To the Disciple each Fellow-Disciple becomes a Brother and Sister, a portion of himself, for his interests and aspirations are theirs, his welfare interwoven with theirs, his progress helped or hindered by their intelligence, morality, and behaviour through the intimacy brought about by their co-discipleship.

"As the members to the body, so are the Disciples to each other, and to the Head and Heart which teach and nourish them with the life-stream of truth.

"As the limbs defend the head and heart of the body, so have the Disciples to defend the head and the heart of Theosophy from injury.

"And if the limbs have to defend the head and heart of their body, then why not, also, the Disciples their Teachers as representing the Science *of Theosophy which contains and includes the 'head' of their privilege, the 'heart' of their spiritual growth?* × × ×

"A Loyal Sense of Duty to the Teacher, a Willing Obedience to the Behests of *TRUTH,* Once We Have Placed Our Confidence in and Believe That Teacher To Be in Possession of It.

"These are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom. Say this to those who have volunteered to be taught by you."

We all volunteered to be taught by H. P. B. How have we answered to the terms of our enlistment? Are we willing to look Truth straight in the face and to defend it at whatever cost to ourselves? Are there still three men worthy of our Lord's blessing in all the hosts of those who have some part accepted the mission and the message of H. P. B.?

We believe there are, and more, and that through these and through these alone may the great Theosophical Society be reincarnated and restored to its first object, the formation of a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without any distinctions whatever.

(*To be continued*)

REINCARNATION IN THE BIBLE*

AN exhaustive paper on this subject is not contemplated in this article, but even a sketch will show that the Christian Bible has in it the doctrine of Reincarnation. Of course those who adhere only to what the church now teaches on the subject of man, his nature and destiny, will not quickly accept any construction outside of the theological one, but there are many who, while not in the church, still cling to the old book from which they were taught.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the writers of the biblical books were Jews with few exceptions, and that the founder of Christianity—Jesus—was himself a Jew. An examination of his own sayings shows that he thought his mission was to the Jews only and not to the Gentiles. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This clearly referred to the Jews and as clearly excluded the Gentiles. And on one occasion he refused for some time to do anything for a Gentile woman until her importunity at last compelled him to act: and then too he referred to his mission to the Jews. So in looking into these things we must also look at what were the beliefs of the day. The Jews then most undoubtedly believed in reincarnation. It was a commonly accepted doctrine as it is now in Hindustan, and Jesus must have been acquainted with it. This we must believe on two grounds: first, that he is claimed by the Christian to be the Son of God and full of all knowledge; and second, that he had received an education which permitted him to dispute with the doctors of divinity. The theory of reincarnation was very old at the time, and the old testament books show this to be so.

"Proverbs" gives the doctrine where Solomon says he was with the Creator from the beginning and that then his (Solomon's) delights were with the sons of men and in the habitable parts of the earth. This disposes of the explanation that he meant he existed in the foreknowledge of the Creator, by the use of the sentences detailing his life on the earth and with men. Then again Elias and many other famous men were to actually return, and all the people were from time to time expecting them. Adam was held to have reincarnated to carry on the work he began so badly, and Seth, Moses, and others were reincarnated as different great persons of subsequent epochs. The land is an oriental one, and the orientals always held the doctrine of the rebirth of mortals. It was not always referred to in respect to the common man who died and was reborn, but came up prominently when the names of great prophets, seers, and legislators were mentioned. If readers will consult any well educated Jew who is not "reformed," they will gain much information on this national doctrine.

Coming now to the time of Jesus, all the foregoing has a bearing on what he said. And, of course, if what he said does not agree

*This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in *The Path* for December, 1892.

with the view of the church, then the church view must be given up or we will be guilty of doubting the wisdom of Jesus and his ability to conduct a great movement. This, indeed, is the real position of the church, for it has promulgated dogmas and condemned doctrines wholly without any authority, and some that Jesus held himself it has put its anathema upon.

When there was brought into the presence of Jesus a man who was born blind, the disciples naturally wondered why he had thus been punished by the Almighty, and asked Jesus whether the man was thus born blind for some sin he had committed, or one done by his parents. The question was put by them with the doctrine of reincarnation fully accepted, for it is obvious the man must have lived before, in their estimation, in order to have done sin for which he was then punished. Now if the doctrine was wrong and pernicious, as the church has declared it to be by anathematizing it, Jesus must have known it to be wrong, and then was the time for him to deny the whole theory and explode it, as well as definitely putting his seal of condemnation upon it for all time. Yet he did not do so; he waived it then and said the blindness was for other reasons in that case. It was not a denial of it. (See November *Forum*).

But again when John the Baptist, who had, so to say, ordained Jesus to his ministry, was killed by the ruler of the country, the news was brought to Jesus, and he then distinctly affirmed the doctrine of reincarnation. Hence his waiving the matter in the case of the blind man is shown to have been no refusal to credit the theory. Jesus affirmed the doctrine, and also affirmed the old ideas in relation to the return to earth of the prophets by saying that the ruler had killed John not knowing that he, John, was Elias "who was for to come."

On another occasion the same subject arose between Jesus and the disciples when they were talking about the coming of a messenger before Jesus himself. The disciples did not understand, and said that Elias was to come first as the messenger, and Jesus distinctly replied that Elias had come already in the person called John the Baptist. This time, if any, was the time for Jesus to condemn the doctrine, but, on the contrary, he boldly asserts it and teaches it, or rather shows its application to certain individuals, as was most interesting and instructive for the disciples who had not enough insight to be able to tell who any man was in his real immortal nature. But Jesus, being a seer, could look into the past and tell them just what historical character any one had been. And so he gave them details about John, and we must suppose more particulars were gone into than have come down to us in the writings naturally incomplete and confessed to be but a partial narrative of the doings and sayings of Jesus.

It must now be evident that there is a diametrical disagreement

between the church and Jesus. The church has cursed the doctrine he taught. Which is right? The true believer in Jesus must reply that Jesus is; the church will say it is right by acting on that line. For if the doctrine be taught, then all men are put on an equal basis, and hence the power of the human rulers of heaven and earth is at once weakened. Such an important doctrine as this is one that Jesus could not afford to pass over. And if it is wrong, then it was his duty to condemn it: indeed, we must suppose that he would have done so were it not entirely right. And as he went further, even to the extent of affirming it, then it stands with his seal of approval for all time.

John the Revealer believed it of course, and so in his book we find the verse saying that the voice of the Almighty declared that the man who overcame should "go out no more" from heaven. This is mere rhetoric if reincarnation be denied; it is quite plain as a doctrine if we construe it to mean that the man who by constant struggle and many lives at last overcomes the delusions of matter will have no need to go out into life any more, but from that time will be a pillar, what the Theosophist knows as "Dhyan Chohan" forevermore. And this is exactly the old and oriental doctrine on the point.

St. Paul also gives the theory of reincarnation in his epistles where he refers to the cases of Jacob and Esau, saying that the Lord loved the one and hated the other before they were born. It is obvious that the Lord cannot love or hate a non-existing thing, and that this means that Jacob and Esau had been in their former lives respectively good and bad and therefore the Lord—or Karma—loved the one and hated the other before their birth as the men known as Jacob and Esau. And Paul was here speaking of the same event that the older prophet Malachi spoke of in strict adherence to the prevalent idea. Following Paul and the disciples came the early fathers of the church, and many of them taught the same. Origen was the greatest of them. He gave the doctrine specifically, and it was because of the influence of his ideas that the Council of Constantinople 500 years after Jesus saw fit to condemn the whole thing as pernicious. This condemnation worked because the fathers were ignorant men, most of them Gentiles who did not care for old doctrines and, indeed, hated them. So it fell out of the public teaching and was at last lost to the Western world. But it must revive, for it is one of the founder's own beliefs, and as it gives a permanent and forceful basis for ethics it is really the most important of all the Theosophical doctrines.

William Brehon.

THE SCIENCE OF LIFE*

What is Life? Hundreds of the most philosophical minds, scores of learned well-skilled physicians, have asked themselves the question, but to little purpose. The veil thrown over primordial Kosmos and the mysterious beginnings of life upon it, has never been withdrawn to the satisfaction of earnest, honest science. The more the men of official learning try to penetrate through its dark folds, the more intense becomes that darkness, and the less they see, for they are like the treasure-hunter, who went across the wide seas to look for that which lay buried in his own garden.

What is then this Science? Is it biology, or the study of life in its general aspect? No. Is it physiology, or the science of organic function? Neither; for the former leaves the problem as much the riddle of the Sphinx as ever; and the latter is the science of death far more than that of life. Physiology is based upon the study of the different organic functions and the organs necessary to the manifestations of life, but that which science calls living matter, is, in sober truth, *dead matter*. Every molecule of the living organs contains the germ of death in itself, and begins dying as soon as born, in order that its successor-molecule should live only to die in its turn. An organ, a natural part of every living being, is but the medium for some special function in life, and is a combination of such molecules. The vital organ, the *whole,* puts the mask of life on, and thus conceals the constant decay and death of its parts. Thus, neither biology nor physiology are the science, nor even branches of the *Science of Life,* but only that of the *appearances* of life. While true philosophy stands Œdipus-like before the Sphinx of life, hardly daring to utter the paradox contained in the answer to the riddle propounded, materialistic science, as arrogant as ever, never doubting its own wisdom for one moment, biologises itself and many others into the belief that it has solved the awful problem of existence. In truth, however, has it even so much as approached its threshold? It is not, surely, by attempting to deceive itself and the unwary in saying that life is but the result of molecular complexity, that it can ever hope to promote the truth. Is vital force, indeed, only a "phantom," as Du-Bois Reymond calls it? For his taunt that "life," as something independent, is but the *asylum ignorantiae* of those who seek refuge in abstractions, when direct explanation is impossible, applies with far more force and justice to those materialists who would blind people to the reality of facts, by substituting bombast and jaw-breaking words in their place. Have any of the five divisions of the functions of life, so pretentiously named—Archebiosis, Biocrosis, Biodiaeresis, Biocaenosis and Bioparodosis,† ever helped a Huxley or a Haeckel to

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*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for November, 1887.

† Or Life-origination, Life-fusion, Life-division, Life-renewal and Life-transmission.

probe more fully the mystery of the generations of the humblest ant—let alone of man? Most certainly not. For life, and everything pertaining to it, belongs to the lawful domain of the *metaphysician* and psychologist, and physical science has no claim upon it. "That which hath been, is that which shall be; and that which hath been is named already—and it is known that it is MAN"—is the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. But "man" here, does not refer to *physical* man—not in its esoteric meaning, at any rate. Scalpels and microscopes may solve the mystery of the material parts of *the shell of man:* they can never cut a window into his soul to open the smallest vista on any of the wider horizons of being.

It is those thinkers alone, who, following the Delphic injunction, have cognized life in their *inner* selves, those who have studied it thoroughly in themselves, before attempting to trace and analyze its reflection in their outer shells, who are the only ones rewarded with some measure of success. Like the fire-philosophers of the Middle Ages, they have skipped over the *appearances* of light and fire in the world of effects, and centred their whole attention upon the producing arcane agencies. Thence, tracing these to the one abstract cause, they have attempted to fathom the MYSTERY, each as far as his intellectual capacities permitted him. Thus they have ascertained that (1) the *seemingly* living mechanism called physical man, is but the fuel, the material, upon which life feeds, in order to manifest itself; and (2) that thereby the inner man receives as his wage and reward the possibility of accumulating additional experiences of the terrestrial illusions called lives.

One of such philosophers is now undeniably the great Russian novelist and reformer, Count Lef N. Tolstoi. How near his views are to the esoteric and philosophical teachings of higher Theosophy, will be found on the perusal of a few fragments from a lecture delivered by him at Moscow before the local Psychological Society.

Discussing the problem of life, the Count asks his audience to admit, for the sake of argument, *an impossibility*. Says the lecturer:—

Let us grant for a moment that all that which modern science longs to learn of life, it has learnt, and now knows; that the problem has become as clear as day; that it is clear how organic matter has, by simple adaptation, come to be originated from inorganic material; that it is as clear how natural forces may be transformed into feelings, will, thought, and that finally, all this is known, not only to the city student, but to every village schoolboy, as well.

I am aware, then, that such and such thoughts and feelings originate from such and such motions. Well, and what then? Can I, or cannot I, produce and guide such motions, in order to excite within my brain corresponding thought? The question—what are the thoughts and feelings I ought to generate in myself and others, remains still, not only unsolved, but even untouched.

Yet it is precisely this question which is the *one* fundamental question of the central idea of life.

Science has chosen as its object a few manifestations that accompany life; and *mistaking** the part for the whole, called these manifestations the integral total of life. . . ."

The question inseparable from the idea of life is not *whence* life, but *how one should live* that life: and it is only by first starting with this question that one can hope to approach some solution in the problem of existence.

The answer to the query "How are we to live?" appears so simple to man that he esteems it hardly worth his while to touch upon it.

. . . One must live the best way one can—that's all. This seems at first sight very simple and well known to all, but it is by far neither as simple nor as well known as one may imagine. . . .

The idea of life appears to man in the beginning as a most simple and self-evident business. First of all, it seems to him that life is in himself, in his own body. No sooner, however, does one commence his search after that life, in any one given spot of the said body, than one meets with difficulties. Life is not in the hair, nor in the nails; neither is it in the foot nor the arm, which may both be amputated; it is not in the blood, it is not in the heart, and it is not in the brain. It is everywhere and it is nowhere. It comes to this: life cannot be found in any of its dwelling-places. Then man begins to look for life in Time; and that, too, appears at first a very easy matter. . . . Yet again, no sooner has he started on his chase than he perceives that here also the business is more complicated than he had thought. Now, I have *lived* fifty-eight years, so says my baptismal church record. But I know that out of these fifty-eight years I slept over twenty. How then? have I lived all these years, or have I not? Deduct the months of my gestation, and those I passed in the arms of my nurse, and shall we call this life, also? Again, out of the remaining thirty-eight years, I know that a good half of that time I slept while moving about; and thus, I could no more say in this case, whether I lived during that time or not. I may have lived a little, and vegetated a little. Here again, one finds that in time, as in the body, life is everywhere, yet nowhere. And now the question naturally arises, whence, then, that life which I can trace to nowhere? Now—will I learn. . . . But it so happens that in this direction also, what seemed to me so easy at first, now seems impossible. I must have been searching for something else, not for my life, assuredly. Therefore, once we have to go in search of the whereabouts of life—if search we have to—then it should be neither in space nor in time, neither as cause nor effect, but as a something which I cognize within myself as quite independent from Space, time and causality.

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*"Mistaking" is an erroneous term to use. The men of science know but too well that what they teach concerning life is a materialistic fiction contradicted at every step by logic and fact. In this particular question science is abused, and made to serve personal hobbies and a determined policy of crushing in humanity every spiritual aspiration and thought. *"Pretending* to mistake" would be more correct.—H. P. B.

That which remains to do now is to study *self*. But how do I cognize life in myself?

This is how I cognize it. I know, to begin with, that I live; and that I live wishing for myself everything that is good, wishing this since I can remember myself, to this day, and from morn till night. All that lives outside of myself is important in my eyes, but only in so far as it co-operates with the creation of that which is productive of *my* welfare. The Universe is important in my sight only because it can give *me,* pleasure.

Meanwhile, something else is bound up with this knowledge in me of my existence. Inseparable from the life I feel, is another cognition allied to it; namely, that besides myself, I am surrounded with a whole world of living creatures, possessed, as I am myself, of the same instinctive realization of their exclusive lives; that all these creatures live for their own objects, which objects are foreign to me; that those creatures do not know, nor do they care to know, anything of my pretensions to an exclusive life, and that all these creatures, in order to achieve success in their objects, are ready to annihilate me at any moment. But this is not all. While watching the destruction of creatures similar in all to myself, I also know that for me too, for that precious Me in whom alone life is represented, a very speedy and inevitable destruction is lying in wait.

It is as if there were two "I's" in man; it is as if they could never live in peace together; it is as if they were eternally struggling, and ever trying to expel each other.

One "I" says, "I alone am living as one should live, all the rest only seems to live. Therefore, the whole *raison d'etre* for the universe is in that *I* may be made comfortable.

The other "I" replies, "The universe is not for thee at all, but for its own aims and purposes, and it cares little to know whether thou art happy or unhappy."

Life becomes a dreadful thing after this!

One "I" says, "I only want the gratification of all my wants and desires, and that is why I need the universe."

The other "I" replies, "All animal life lives only for the gratification of its wants and desires. It is the wants and desires of animals alone that are gratified at the expense and detriment of other animals; hence the ceaseless struggle between the animal species. Thou art an animal, and therefore thou hast to struggle. Yet, however successful in thy struggle, the rest of the struggling creatures must sooner or later crush thee."

Still worse! life becomes still more dreadful. . . .

But the most terrible of all, that which includes in itself the whole of the foregoing, is that:—

One "I" says, "I want to live, to live for ever."

And that the other "I" replies, "Thou shalt surely, perhaps

in a few minutes, die; as also shall die all those thou lovest, for thou and they are destroying with every motion your lives, and thus approaching ever nearer suffering, death, all that which thou so hatest, and which thou fearest above anything else."

This is the worst of all. . . .

To change this condition is impossible. . . . One can avoid moving, sleeping, eating, even breathing, but one cannot escape from thinking. One thinks, and that thought, *my* thought, is poisoning every step in my life, as a personality.

No sooner has man commenced a conscious life than that consciousness repeats to him incessantly without respite, over and over the same thing again. "To live such life as you feel and see in your past, the life lived by animals and many men too, lived in *that* way, which made you become what you are now—is no longer possible. Were you to attempt doing so, you could never escape thereby the struggle with all the world of creatures which live as you do—for their personal objects; and then those creatures will inevitably destroy you." . . .

To change this situation is impossible. There remains but one thing to do, and that is always done by him who, beginning to live, transfers his objects in life outside of himself, and aims to reach them. . . . But, however far he places them outside his personality, as his mind gets clearer, none of these objects will satisfy him.

Bismarck, having united Germany, and now ruling Europe—if his reason has only thrown any light upon the results of his activity—must perceive, as much as his own cook does who prepares a dinner that will be devoured in an hour's time, the same unsolved contradiction between the vanity and foolishness of all he has done, and the eternity and reasonableness of that which exists for ever. If they only think of it, each will see as clearly as the other; *firstly*, that the preservation of the integrity of Prince Bismarck's dinner, as well as that of powerful Germany, is solely due: the preservation of the former—to the police, and the preservation of the latter—to the army; and that, so long only as both keep a good watch. Because there are famished people who would willingly eat the dinner, and nations which would fain be as powerful as Germany. Secondly, that neither Prince Bismarck's dinner, nor the might of the German Empire, coincide with the aims and purposes of universal life, but that they are in flagrant contradiction with them. And thirdly, that as he who cooked the dinner, so also the might of Germany, will both very soon die, and that so shall perish, and as soon, both the dinner and Germany. That which shall survive alone is the Universe, which will never give one thought to either dinner or Germany, least of all to those who have cooked them.

As the intellectual condition of man increases, he comes to the idea that no happiness connected with his personality is an achievement, but only a necessity. Personality is only that in-

cipient state from which begins life, and the ultimate limit of life. . . .

Where, then, does life begin, and where does it end, I may be asked? Where ends the night, and where does day commence? Where, on the shore, ends the domain of the sea, and where does the domain of land begin?

There is day and there is night; there is land and there is sea; there is life and there is *no* life.

Our life, ever since we became conscious of it, is a pendulum-like motion between two limits.

One limit is, an absolute unconcern for the life of the infinite Universe an energy directed only toward the gratification of one's own personality.

The other limit is a complete renunciation of that personality, the greatest concern with the life of the infinite Universe, in full accord with it, the transfer of all our desires and good will from one's self, to that infinite Universe and all the creatures outside of us.*

The nearer to the first limit, the less life and bliss, the closer to the second, the more life and bliss. Therefore, man is ever moving from one end to the other; *i.e.* he lives. THIS MOTION IS LIFE ITSELF.

And when I speak of life, know that the idea of it is indissolubly connected in my conceptions with that of *conscious* life. No other life is known to me except conscious life, nor can it be known to anyone else.

We call life, the life of animals, organic life. But this is no life at all, only a certain state or condition of life manifesting to us.

But what is this consciousness or mind, the exigencies of which exclude personality and transfer the energy of man outside of him and into that state which is conceived by us as the blissful state of love?

What is conscious mind? Whatsoever we may be defining, we have to define it with our conscious mind. Therefore, with what shall we define mind?

If we have to define all with our mind, it follows that conscious mind cannot be defined. Yet all of us, we not only know it, but it is the only thing which is given to us to know undeniably. . . .

It is the same law as the law of life, of everything organic, animal or vegetable, with that one difference that we *see* the consummation of an intelligent law in the life of a plant. But the law of conscious mind, to which we are subjected as the tree, is subjected to its law, we *see* it not, but fulfil it. . . .

We have settled that life is that which is not our life. It is herein that lies hidden the root of error. Instead of studying that life of which we are conscious within ourselves, absolutely and exclusively—since we can know of nothing else—in order to study it, we observe that which is devoid of the most important factor and

*This is what the Theosophists call "living *the* life"—in a nut-shell.—H. P. B.

faculty of our life, namely, intelligent consciousness. By so doing, we act as a man who attempts to study an object by its shadow or reflection does.

If we know that substantial particles are subjected during their transformations to the activity of the organism; we know it not because we have observed or studied it, but simply because we possess a certain familiar organism united to us, namely the organism of our animal, which is but too well known to us as the material of our life, *i. e.* that upon which we are called to work and to rule by subjecting it to the law of reason. . . . No sooner has man lost faith in life, no sooner has he transferred that life into that which is no life, than he becomes wretched, and sees death. . . . A man who conceives life such as he finds it in his consciousness, knows neither misery, nor death: for all the good in life for him is in the subjection of his animal to the law of reason, to do which is not only in his power, but takes place unavoidably in him. The death of particles in the animal being, we know. The death of animals and of man, as an animal, we know; but we know nought about the death of conscious mind, nor can we know anything of it, *just because that conscious mind is the very life itself.* And *Life can never be Death.* . . .

The animal lives an existence of bliss, neither seeing nor knowing death, and dies without cognizing it. Why then should man have received the gift of seeing and knowing it, and why should death be so terrible to him that it actually tortures his soul, often forcing him to kill himself out of sheer fear of death? Why should it be so? Because the man who sees death is a sick man, one who has broken the law of his life, and lives no longer a conscious existence. He has become an animal himself, an animal which also has broken the law of life.

The life of man is an aspiration to bliss, and that which he aspires to is given to him. The light lit in the soul of man is bliss and life, and that light can never be darkness, as there exists—verily there exists for man—only this solitary light which burns within his soul."

We have translated this rather lengthy fragment from the Report of Count Tolstoi's superb lecture, because it reads like the echo of the finest teachings of the universal ethics of true theosophy. His definition of life in its abstract sense, and of the life every earnest theosophist ought to follow, each according to, and in the measure of, his *natural* capacities—is the summary and the Alpha and the Omega of practical psychic, if not spiritual life. There are sentences in the lecture which, to the average theosophist will seem too hazy, and perhaps incomplete. Not one will he find, however, which could be objected to by the most exacting, practical occultist. It may be called a treatise on the Alchemy of Soul. For that "solitary" light in man, which burns for ever, and can never be darkness in its intrinsic nature, though the "animal" outside us may remain

blind to it—is that "Light" upon which the Neo Platonists of the Alexandrian school, and after them the Rosecroix and especially the Alchemists, have written volumes, though to the present day their true meaning is a dark mystery to most men.

True, Count Tolstoi is neither an Alexandrian nor a modern theosophist; still less is he a Rosecroix or an Alchemist. But that which the latter have concealed under the peculiar phraseology of the Fire-philosophers, purposely confusing cosmic transmutations with Spiritual Alchemy, all that is transferred by the great Russian thinker from the realm of the metaphysical unto the field of practical life. That which Schelling would define as a realisation of the identity of subject and object in the man's inner Ego, that which unites and blends the latter with the universal Soul—which is but the identity of subject and object on a higher plane, or the unknown Deity—all that Count Tolstoi has blended together without quitting the terrestrial plane. He is one of those few *elect* who begin with intuition and end with *quasi*-omniscience. It is the transmutations of the baser metals—the *animal mass*—into gold and silver, or the philosopher's stone, the development and manifestation of man's higher, Self which the Count has achieved. The *alcahest* of the inferior Alchemist is the *All-geist*, the all-pervading Divine Spirit of the higher Initiate; for Alchemy was, and is, as very few know to this day, as much a spiritual philosophy as it is a physical science. He who knows nought of one, will never know much of the other. Aristotle told it in so many words to his pupil, Alexander: "It is not a stone," he said, of the philosopher's stone. "*It is in every man and in every place*, and at all seasons, and is called the *end* of all philosophers," as the *Vedanta* is *the end* of all philosophies.

To wind up this essay *on the Science of Life*, a few words may be said of the eternal riddle propounded to mortals by the Sphinx. To fail to solve the problem contained in it, was to be doomed to sure death, as the Sphinx of life devoured the unintuitional, who would live only in their "animal." He who lives for Self, and only for *Self*, will surely die, as the higher "I" tells the lower "animal" in the Lecture. The riddle has seven keys to it, and the Count opens the mystery with one of the highest. For, as the author on "Hermetic Philosophy" beautifully expressed it: "The real mystery most familiar and, at the same time, most unfamiliar to every man, *into which he must be initiated or perish as an atheist, is himself*. For him is the elixir of life, to quaff which, before the discovery of the philosopher's stone, is to drink the beverage of death, while it confers on the adept and the *epopt*, the true immortality. He may know truth as it really is—*Aletheia*, the breath of God, or Life, the conscious mind in man."

This is "the Alcahest which dissolves all things," and Count Tolstoi has well understood the riddle.

H. P. B.

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA*

(Continued from September Number)

He that, being self-contained, hath vanquished doubt,
Disparting self from service, soul from works,
Enlightened and emancipate, my Prince!
Works fetter him no more! Cut then atwain
With sword of wisdom, Son of Bharata!
This doubt that binds thy heart-beats! cleave the bond
Born of thy ignorance! Be bold and wise!
Give thyself to the field with me! Arise!

These strong words end the chapter. They are addressed to those who can be strong, and not to the ever-doubting one who believes neither his own thoughts nor the words of others, but who is forever asking for more. But there can be no uncertainty about the cause of doubt: as Krishna says, "It springs from ignorance, and all we have to do is to take the sword of knowledge and cut all doubts at once." Many will say that they have been always looking for this that they may have peace, and that so many systems are presented for their consideration they are unable to come to any conclusion whatever. This would seem very true on a view of the thousand and one philosophies placed before us with varying degrees of clearness by the exponents of them. But it has appeared to us that they can all be easily sifted and divided into classes where they will range themselves under two great heads,—those which permit nothing to be believed until the miserable mass of mediocre minds have said that they at last accept this or that, and those which have each a little of what may possibly be true and a great deal that is undeniable nonsense. The doubter is a devotee of the first school, or he is an adherent partly of one and partly of the other; and in the latter case is torn almost asunder by the numberless conventional ideas which bear the stamp of authority coercing him into an acceptance of that which revolts his judgment whenever he permits it to have free exercise. If you tell him that the much-lauded mind is not the final judge, and that there are higher faculties which may be exercised for the acquirement of knowledge, he disputes on the lines laid down by learned professors of one school or another, and denies the validity of proofs offered on the ground that they are instances of "double cerebration," and what not. To such as these the chapter will not appeal, but there are many students who have sincere doubts, and with those the difficulty arises from ignorance. They are afraid to admit to themselves that the ancients could have found out the truth; and the reason would appear to be that this judgment is passed from a consideration of the merely material state of those people or of the present nations who in any degree follow such philosophies. Our civilization glorifies material possessions and progress, and those who have not these boons cannot be the possessors of either truth or the way to it. But the keepers of truth have never said that we will be neither rich nor

* This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for November, 1888.

civilized if we follow their system. On the contrary, in the days when Krishna lived and taught his system there was more material glory and power than now, and more knowledge of all the laws of nature than every one of our scientists put together have in their reach. Hence if any theosophist teaches that the reign of the doctrines of the Masters of the Society will be the knell of all material comfort and progress, he errs, and sows the seeds of trouble for himself and his friends. Why, then, is it not wise to at once admit that there may be truth in these doctrines, throw away all doubt, and enjoy the light coming from the East?

So long as doubt remains there will be no peace, no certainty, nor any hope of finding it in this world or the lives upon it hereafter, and not even in the vast reaches of other universes on which we may live in future ages; the doubter now will be the doubter then, and so on while the wheel revolves for the millions of years yet before us.

If we follow the advice of the great Prince, our next step will be to assume, in view of patent facts of evolution, that certain great Beings exist who long ago must have trod the same road, and now possess the knowledge with the power to impart as much as we are able to take. To this Krishna refers in these words:

"Seek this knowledge by doing honor, by prostration, by strong search, and by service; those gifted with this knowledge, who perceive the truth of things, will teach this knowledge to thee."

And such are the exact words of the Masters of our Society. They do not reward or teach merely because we so wish it to be, nor because we value ourselves at so much; our valuation of ourselves is not Theirs; They value us at the real and just rate, and cannot be moved by tears or entreaties not followed by acts, and the acts that delight Them are those performed in Their service, and no others.

What, then, is the work in which They wish to be served?

It is not the cultivation of our psychic powers, nor the ability to make phenomena, nor any kind of work for self when that is the sole motive.

The service and the work are in the cause of Humanity, by whomsoever performed, whether by members of the Theosophical Society or by those outside of it. And all the expectant members of the Society now standing with their mouths open waiting for what they are pleased to call food, may as well know that they will get nothing unless the work is done or attempted.

Let this right attitude be taken, and what follows is described in this chapter:

"A man who perfects himself in devotion finds springing up in himself in the progress of time this spiritual knowledge, which is superior to and comprehends every action without exception."

The fourth chapter is ended. Let all our doubts come to an end!

"What room for doubt and what for sorrow can there be in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind, differing only in degree."

William Brehon, F. T. S.

APPENDICES TO FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH

KARMA.*

WITH reference to a tenet in one of the *Fragments of Occult Truth,* a respected member of our Society—N. D. K.—writes to enquire "*What Karma propels the higher Ego into the next birth,*" *when "a highly depraved personality is dropped out.*"

At the outset it may be well to repeat again what has been already so often stated, namely, that the *Fragments* being but fragmentary and *incomplete,* must go on exhibiting difficulties and even *apparent* discrepancies until the whole doctrine concerning the after-state of the *Ego* is thoroughly mastered. But students with a tolerable amount of intuitive perception have had enough of philosophy given them, to enable the more advanced ones to work out many a detail: especially if they live the life which clears the inner vision. Few of these can be given in a publication that reaches the outsider as well as the student of occultism. There are secrets of initiation that it is impossible to communicate promiscuously to the world at large, for it would amount to throwing many a mind into a direful confusion, unless the whole doctrine is explained; and this no adept or even advanced neophyte would consent to do at this stage of the teaching. But this particular tenet having been already outlined, there is no further necessity of remaining silent with regard to this special detail.

The readers of Col. Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism* may well recall here with advantage the following very suggestive passages (pages 54 and 55):—

" . . . In each birth the *personality* differs from that of the previous or next succeeding birth. Karma, the *deus ex machina,* masks (or shall we say reflects?) itself now in the personality of a sage, again as an artisan, and so on throughout the string of births. But though personalities ever shift, the one line of life along which they are strung like beads, runs unbroken. . . ."

Alongside with the above quotation should be put the following from the *Fragments of Occult Truth, No.* I (October *Theosophist,* Vol. III, No. I, page 19, col. 2):—

" . . . The time will come, no doubt, but many steps higher on the ladder, when the Ego will regain its consciousness of all its past stages of existence. . . ."

If the enquirer will realise the real meaning of these two quotations, he will have the key to a correct understanding of the question as to what *Karma* propels the higher *Ego* into the next

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for July, 1883.

birth, when even that of a highly depraved personality is dropped out, together with the personal soul that weaved it out. It will be clear from these passages that the individuality or the spiritual monad is a thread upon which are strung various personalities. Each personality leaves its own—the higher spiritual—impressions upon the divine *Ego,* the consciousness of which returns at a certain stage of its progress, even that of the highly depraved soul that had to perish in the end. The reason for it becomes self-evident, if one reflects that however criminal and lost to every glimmer of a higher feeling, no human soul is yet born utterly depraved, and that there was a time during the youth of the sinful human personality when it had worked out some kind or other of *Karma;* and that it is this that survives and forms the basis of the *Karma* to come. To make it clearer let us suppose that A lives to that age when a person becomes an adult and begins to bloom fully into life. No man, however vicious his natural tendency, becomes so at once. He has had therefore time to evolve a *Karma,* however faint and insignificant. Let us further imagine that at the age of eighteen or twenty A begins to give way to vice and thus gradually loses the remotest connection with his higher principle. At thirty or say forty, he dies. Now, the personality of A between fifteen and twenty is as little the personality of A from twenty to thirty, as though it were quite another man. Even the physiologists divide the physical personality into stages of seven, and show man changing atoms to the last, every seven years. The same with the inner man. The fifth principle of the sensual, highly depraved man, may and will perish, while the *Karma* of his youth, though not strong and complete enough to secure for him a bliss in *Devachan* and union with his higher principle—is yet sufficiently outlined to allow the monad a grasp on it for the next rebirth. On the other hand we are taught that it so happens sometimes that the *Karma* of a personality is not fully worked out in the birth that follows. Life is made up of accidents, and the personality that becomes may be hindered by circumstances from receiving the full due its *Karma* is entitled to, whether for good or for bad. But the Law of Retribution will never allow itself to be cheated by blind chance. There is then a provision to be made, and the accounts that could not be settled in one birth will be squared in the succeeding one. The portion of the sum-total which could not be summed up in one column is carried forward to the following. For verily the many lives of an individual monad were well compared in the *Fragments* to the pages of an account book—The Book of Life or—Lives. . . .

Out of these impressions, then, which constitute the Karma of the youth, is evolved the new personality. Our botanical friends may know that the croton plant evolves out of itself another plant, when the one already evolved dies out or withers away. Nature must always progress, and each fresh attempt is more successful than the previous one. This fresh evolution is due to the latent potentiality of life it has within itself. In the same manner, although

one particular personality may be so far depraved as to be entirely dissociated from the spiritual monad and go into the *eighth* sphere, where annihilation is its lot, yet the impressions of the previous personalities upon the higher *Ego* have in them potentiality enough to evolve a new physical Ego, like the croton plant. The connection between a man's spiritual monad and the succession of physical Egos with which it is temporarily associated, has been, somewhere in these columns, compared to the retrospective glance of a man on some past period of his earthly existence. While reviewing in his memory his work day by day—those days on which he did nothing of any importance and passed idly away, having left no impression on his mind, must be, and are to him, like a perfect blank. No consciousness that he had passed such days remains there. In the same manner, the *Ego* when at the end of its long pilgrimage will regain consciousness of those personalities only which have made a sufficiently strong spiritual, hence indelible, mark on the monad, while the memory of the conscious acts of the particular depraved personality which goes to the eighth sphere will be entirely obliterated.

It may then be urged what stimulus is there for a man to be good and pure, if his spiritual monad is anyhow to progress? This is no doubt a side issue but a very important one. It must not be discussed however at this stage of our writing.

DEATH AND IMMORTALITY.*

[The following letter states an embarrassment which may very likely have occurred to other readers of the passages quoted, besides our correspondent.—Ed.]

OCCULT FRAGMENTS AND THE BOOK OF KHIU-TE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "THEOSOPHIST."

IN the article on "Death" by the late Eliphas Levi, printed in the October number of the Theosophist, vol. III., page 13, the writer says that "to be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of Souls; *between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.*" In your explanatory note on this passage you quote the book of Khiu-te, which says that "to force oneself upon the current of immortality, or rather to secure for oneself an *endless series of re-births as conscious* individualities, one must become a co-worker with nature, either for *good* or for *bad*, in her work of creation and reproduction or in that of destruction. It is but the *useless drones* which she gets rid of, violently ejecting them and making them perish by the millions as self-conscious entities. Thus while the good and pure strive to reach Nirvana, the wicked will seek, on the

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for November, 1882.

contrary, a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings, preferring to be ever suffering under the law of retributive justice rather than give up their lives as portions of the integral universal whole. Being well aware that they can never hope to reach the final rest in pure spirit or *Nirvana,* they cling to life in any form rather than give up that 'desire for life,' or *Tanha,* which causes a new aggregation of *Skandas,* or individuality to be re-born. . . . There are thoroughly wicked or depraved men, yet as highly intellectual and acutely *spiritual* for evil, as those who are spiritual for good. The *egos* of these may escape the law of final destruction or annihilation for ages to come. . . . Heat and cold are the two 'poles,' *i. e.,* good and evil, *spirit* and *matter.* Nature *spues* the 'lukewarm' or 'the useless portion of mankind' out of her mouth, *i. e.,* annihilates them." In the very same number in which these lines occur we have the "Fragments of Occult Truth," and we learn thence that there are seven entities or principles constituting a human being. When death occurs, the first three principles (*i. e.,* the body, the vital energy, and astral body) are dissipated; and with regard to the remaining four principles "one of *two* things occurs." If the Spiritual Ego (sixth principle) has been in life material in its tendencies, then at death it continues to cling blindly to the lower elements of its late combination, and the true spirit severs itself from these and passes away elsewhere, when the Spiritual Ego is also dissipated and ceases to exist. Under such circumstances only two entities (the fourth and fifth, *i. e.,* Kama Rupa and Physical Ego) are left, and the *shells* take long periods to disintegrate.

On the other hand, if the tendencies of the ego have been towards things spiritual, it will cling to the spirit, and with this pass into the adjoining *World of Effects,* and there evolve out of itself by the spirit's aid a new ego, to be re-born (after a brief period of freedom and enjoyment) in the next higher objective world of causes.

The "Fragments" teach that, apart from the cases of the higher adepts, there are two conditions:—*First,* that in which the Spirit is obliged to sever its connection; and, *secondly,* that in which the Spirit is able to continue its connection with the fourth, fifth and sixth principles. In either case the fourth and fifth principles are dissipated after a longer or a shorter period, and, in the case of the spiritual-minded, the Spiritual Ego undergoes a series of ascending births, while in the case of the depraved no Spiritual Ego remains and there is simply disintegration of the fourth and fifth principles after immense periods of time. The "Fragments" do not seem to admit of a third or intermediary case which could explain the condition of Eliphas Levi's "useless portion" of mankind after death. It appears to me also that there could be only two cases—(1) either the spirit continues its connection, or (2) it severs its connection. What, then, is meant by the "useless portion of mankind" who, you suggest, are annihilated by the millions? Are they a combination of less than seven principles? That cannot be, for even the very

wicked and depraved have them all. What, then, becomes of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh principles in the case of the so-called *"useless portion of mankind?"*

The "Fragments" again tell us that, in the case of the wicked, the fourth and fifth principles are simply disintegrated after long ages, while in your above quoted note you say that the "wicked will seek a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings," and again in the note to the word "Hell" you write that it is "a world of nearly absolute *matter*, and one preceding the last one in the 'circle of necessity' from which there is no redemption, for there reigns *absolute* darkness." These two notes seem to suggest that, in the case of the depraved, the fourth and fifth principles are born again in inferior worlds and have a series of conscious existences.

The "Fragments" are admittedly the production of the "Brothers," and what I could gather from them after a careful perusal seems apparently not to accord with your notes quoted above. Evidently there is a gap somewhere, and, as the "useless portion of mankind" have been so far noticed, a more exhaustive explanation of them after the method of the seven principles is needed to make your otherwise learned note accord with the "Fragments." I might mention again that at every step the words "matter" and "spirit" confound the majority of your readers, and it is highly important and necessary that these two words be satisfactorily explained so that the average reader might understand wherein lies the difference between the two; what is meant by matter emanating from spirit, and whether spirit does not become limited to that extent by the emanation of matter therefrom.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

N. D. K.———, F. T. S.

*** The apparent discrepancy between the two statements, that our correspondent quotes, does not involve any real contradiction at all, nor is there a "gap" in the explanation. The confusion arises from the unfamiliarity of ordinary thinkers, unused to Occult ideas, with the distinction between the personal and individual entities in Man. Reference has been made to this distinction in modern Occult writing very frequently, and in *Isis* itself where the explanations of a hundred mysteries lie but half buried,—they were altogether buried in earlier works on Occult philosophy,—only waiting for the application of intelligence guided by a little Occult knowledge to come out into the light of day. When *Isis* was written, it was conceived by those,—from whom the impulse, which directed its preparation, came,—that the time was not ripe for the explicit declaration of a great many truths which they are now willing to impart in plain language. So the readers of that book were supplied rather with hints, sketches, and adumbrations of the philosophy to which it related, than with methodical expositions. Thus in reference to the present idea the difference between personal and individual identity is suggested, if not fully set forth at page 315, vol. I.

There it is stated as the view of certain philosophers, with whom, it is easy to see, the writer concurs:—"Man and Soul had to conquer their immortality by ascending towards the Unity with which, if successful, they were finally linked. The individualisation of Man after death depended on the spirit, not on his soul and body. Although the word personality, in the sense in which it is usually understood, is an absurdity, if applied literally to our immortal essence, still the latter is a distinct entity, immortal and eternal *per se*." And a little later on:—"A person may have won his immortal life, and remain the same *inner self* he was on earth throughout eternity, but this does not imply necessarily that he must remain the Mr. Smith or Mr. Brown he was on earth."

A full consideration of these ideas will solve the embarrassment in which our correspondent is placed. Eliphas Levi is talking about personalities—the "Fragments" about individualities. Now, as regards the personalities, the "useless portion of mankind" to which Eliphas Levi refers, is the great bulk thereof. The *permanent* preservation of a personal identity beyond death is a very rare achievement, accomplished only by those who wrest her secrets from Nature, and control their own super-material development. In his favourite symbolical way Eliphas Levi indicates the people who contrive to do this as those who are immortal in good by identification with God, or immortal in evil by identification with Satan. That is to say, the preservation of personal identity beyond death (or rather, let us say, far beyond death, reserving for the moment an explanation of the distinction) is accomplished only by adepts and sorcerers—the one class having acquired the supreme secret knowledge by holy methods, and with benevolent motives; the other having acquired it by unholy methods, and for base motives. But that which constitutes the inner self, the purer portions of the earthly personal soul united with the spiritual principles and constituting the essential individuality, is insured a perpetuation of life in new births whether the person, whose earthly surroundings are its present habitat, becomes endued with the higher knowledge, or remains a plain ordinary man all his life.

This doctrine cannot be treated as one which falls in at once with the view of things entertained by people whose conceptions of immortality have been corrupted by the ignoble teaching of modern churches. Few exoteric religions ask their devotees to lift their imaginations above the conception that life beyond the grave is a sort of prolongation of life on this side of it. They are encouraged to believe that through "eternity," if they are good in this life, they will live on in some luxurious Heaven just as they would be living if transported to some distant country, miraculously protected there from disease and decay, and continuing forever the "Mr. Smith or Mr. Brown" they may have been previous to emigration. The conception is just as absurd, when closely thought out, as the conception that for the merits or the sins of this brief life—but a moment in the course of eternity—they will be able to secure

infinite bliss, or incur the utmost horrors of perpetual punishment. Ends and means, causes and effects, must be kept in due proportion to one another in the worlds of spirit as in the worlds of flesh. It is nonsense for a man who has not first rendered his personality something altogether abnormal to conceive that it can be rationally thought of as surviving *for ever*. It would be folly to wish even that it could be so perpetuated, for, how could human beings of ignoble, miserable life, whose personality is merely a congeries of wretched and sordid memories, be happy in finding their misery stereotyped for all coming time, and in perpetual contrast with the superior personalities of other such stereotypes. The memory of every personal life, indeed, is imperishably preserved in the mysterious records of each existence, and the immortal individual spiritual entity will one day,—but in a future so remote that it is hardly worth thinking about much at present,—be able to look back upon it, as upon one of the pages in the vast book of lives which he will by that time have compiled. But let us come back from these very transcendental reflections to the destinies more immediately impending over the great majority of us whom Eliphas Levi so uncivilly speaks of as "the useless portion of mankind"—useless only, be it remembered, as regards our special present congeries of earthly circumstances—not as regards the *inner-self* which is destined to active enjoyment of life and experience very often in the future among better circumstances, both on this earth and in superior planets.

Now, most people will be but too apt to feel that unsatisfactory as the circumstances may be, which constitute their present personalities, these are after all *themselves*—"a poor thing, Sir, but mine own,"—and that the inner spiritual monads, of which they are but very dimly conscious, by the time they are united with entirely different sets of circumstances in new births, will be other people altogether in whose fate they cannot take any interest. In truth when the time comes they will find the fate of those people profoundly interesting, as much so as they find their own fates now. But passing over this branch of the subject, there is still some consolation for weak brethren who find the notion of quitting their present personality at the end of their present lives too gloomy to be borne. Eliphas Levi's exposition of the doctrine is a very brief one,—as regards the passage quoted—and it passes over a great deal which, from the point of view we are now engaged with, is of very great importance. In talking about immortality the great Occultist is thinking of the vast stretches of time over which the personality of the adept and the sorcerer may be made to extend. When he speaks of annihilation after this life, he ignores a certain interval, which may perhaps be not worth considering in reference to the enormous whole of existence, but which none the less is very well worth the attention of people who cling to the little fragment of their life experience which embodies the personality of which we have been talking.

It has been explained, in more than one paper published in this magazine during the last few months, that the passage of the spiritual monad into a re-birth does not immediately follow its release from the fleshly body last inhabited here. In the *Kama-loka,* or atmosphere of this earth, the separation of the two groups of ethereal principles takes place, and in the vast majority of cases in which the late personality,—the fifth principle yields up something which is susceptible of perpetuation and of union with the sixth,—the spiritual monad thus retaining consciousness of its late personality for the time being passes into the state described as *Devachan,* where it leads, for very long periods indeed as compared with those of life on this earth, an existence of the most unalloyed satisfaction and conscious enjoyment. Of course this state is not one of activity nor of exciting contrasts between pain and pleasure, pursuit and achievement, like the state of physical life, but it is one in which the personality of which we are speaking is perpetuated, as far as that is compatible with the non-perpetuation of that which has been painful in its experience. It is from this state that the spiritual monad is re-born into the next active life, and from the date of that re-birth the old personality is done with. But for any imagination, which finds the conception of re-birth and new personality uncomfortable, the doctrine of *Devachan*—and these "doctrines," be it remembered, are statements of scientific fact which Adepts have ascertained to be as real as the stars though as far out of reach for most of us,—the doctrine of *Devachan,* we say will furnish people who cannot give up their earth life memories all at once,—with a soft place to fall upon.

DEVACHAN.*

The Theosophist, 2-6-4 page

WILL you kindly permit me a question?

In Vol. 4, No. 2, on page 29, I find, that in the state described as Devachan the spiritual monad leads for very long periods an existence of unalloyed satisfaction and *conscious* enjoyment, however without activity, without exciting contrast between pain and pleasure, without pursuit and achievement.

Now, how can a conscious existence without activity or pursuit be one of satisfaction or enjoyment? Would not annihilation be preferable to such a state of indolence? In the Christian heaven there is at least the waving of palm-leaves and harping. A poor amusement indeed; but better than nothing?—Please explain.

Hoping that my inquisitiveness will give no offence.

I am very respectfully,

Georgetown, Colorado, *January* 31.

Your obedient servant,

F. Hartmann, F. T. S.

Editor's Note:—Our correspondent's question has been already anticipated by the important appendices added to the recent "Fragment" on Devachan. To realise the conditions of spiritual existence of any sort it is

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necessary to get above the plane of merely physical perceptions. One cannot see the things of the spirit with the eyes of the flesh, and one cannot successfully appreciate subjective phenomena by help only of those intellectual reflections which appertain to the physical senses. "How can a conscious existence without *activity or pursuit* be one of satisfaction or enjoyment?" It would only emphasise the mistaken idea which this question embodies if one were to ask instead, "how can a conscious existence without athletic sports and hunting be one of enjoyment?" The cravings of man's animal or even bodily human nature are not permanent in their character. The demands of the mind are different from those of the body. In physical life an ever recurring desire for change impresses our imagination with the idea that there can be no continuity of contentment, without variety of occupation and amusement. To realise completely the way in which, a single vein of spiritual consciousness may continue for considerable periods of time to engage the attention—not only the contented, but the delighted attention,—of a spiritual entity, is probably possible only for persons who already in life have developed certain inner faculties, dormant in mankind at large. But meanwhile our present correspondent may perhaps derive some satisfaction, from the fact,—as explained in recent essays on the subject,—that one sort of variety is developed in Devachan in a very high degree; *viz.*, the variety which naturally grows out of the simple themes set in vibration during life. Immense growths for example, of knowledge itself are possible in Devachan, for the spiritual entity which has begun the "pursuit" of such knowledge during life. Nothing can happen to a spirit in Devachan, the key-note of which has not been struck during life; the conditions of a subjective existence are such that the importation of quite external impulses and alien thoughts is impossible. But the seed of thought once sown,—the current of thoughts once set going (the metaphor may freely be varied to suit any taste,)—and then its developments in devachan may be infinite for the sixth sense there, and the sixth principle are our instructors, and in such society there can be no isolation, as physical humanity understands the term. The spiritual ego in fact, under the tuition of his own sixth principle, need be in no fear of being dull, and would be as likely to sigh for a doll's house or a box of ninepins as for the harps and palm-leaves of the mediæval Heaven.

PROPHECIES BY H. P. BLAVATSKY*

IN the introduction to the *Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky boldly affirms the existence of a great Fraternity of Men, Adepts, who preserve the true philosophy through all changes, now revealing it, and again, at certain eras, withdrawing it from a degraded age; and emphatically she says that the doctrine is never a new one, but only a handing on again of what was always the system. Then referring to the reception her works would receive in this century (Introd. xxxvii,) she says that scholars with reputations would not regard the teachings seriously, but that *"they will be derided and rejected à priori in this century."*

This is quite definite, and was a prophetical statement. All Theosophists have witnessed its confirmation, for surely both she and the old teachings given out have been derided and rejected. Derision arose first on the ground that such things could not be. If there was no strength in the theories advanced, derision would have been all they should have met, but soon their power compelled

* This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for December, 1892.

enough attention to bring on rejection. So this prophecy is fulfilled.

The next one is in the same sentence, and may serve to give courage to those who have found light, hope, and strength in Theosophy, and to those ardent members who are not so old as to fail in living a few more years. Continuing, she declares that the derision and rejection met in this century would be *"only in this one.* For in the twentieth century of our era scholars *will begin to recognize that the Secret Doctrine has neither been invented nor exaggerated,* but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally that *its teachings antedate the Vedas."*

We have but eight years to wait for this recognition, and then, as she has said in a private letter of some years ago, after her death—already accomplished—Theosophists and the world will know what they have lost. It is not long to wait, and here is a prophecy easy to watch and profit by. These words of hers are not the cry of a martyr, but the clear, bold tone of the sage who, while giving out right teachings in a transitory, a preparatory age, knows full well that present recognition is an impossibility; there is no regret and no note of disappointed hope in it, for she had no such hopes or ambitions to be defeated, and perchance will be on the scene at the time of the prophesied indorsement.

The bearing of the statement about the *Vedas* is important for those Theosophists to remember who, whether Hindus or Westerns, have now and then fancied that H. P. B. rested on and worked for the Indian sacred books. For if her teachings will be one day shown to antedate the *Vedas,* then they must be superior to the latter and to all *Shastras, Puranas,* and *Sutras.* What, then, of caste and any school of peripatetics founded upon individual constructions? The answer is easy for those who shall believe in the superior doctrine.

Then passing on to the next page (Introd. xxxviii) to touch upon the subject of the Messenger from the great Fraternity—she herself being the one for this Century—she observes significantly: that "In Century the Twentieth some disciple more informed, and far better fitted, *may be sent by the Masters of Wisdom* to give final and irrefutable proofs that there exists a science called *Gupta-Vidya;* and that, like the once mysterious source of the Nile, the source of all religions and philosophies now known to the world has been for many ages forgotten and lost to men, but is at last found."

Herein are two prophetical intimations. The first, that in the Century just at hand the Masters may send another Messenger with power, learning, strength, and credentials to carry on the work she began and in which we have been so fortunate as to be companions; the second, that this Messenger will make clear the sources we have sought. The first will be glorious, the second satisfying; and both will help humanity. It is not long to wait, eight years! And cannot indiscreet Theosophists put off attempts at the making of dogmas they might have trouble to give up?

To close these words on the future she says (Introd. xliv,) "And then the last prophecy contained in that book (the first volume of the prophetic record for the Black Age) will be accomplished. We have not long to wait, and many of us will witness the Dawn of the new Cycle at the end of which not a few accounts will be settled and squared between the races."

This new cycle begins in the next century, and when the end of it is reached much that is now unknown will have been revealed; the earth itself will give up the secrets of the past, in ignorance of which our day has laughed at the ancients; the Fraternity will have caused "accidental discoveries" of manuscripts and objects, the finding of which will make many a theologian quake and bring to the barbarian followers of the ancients great joy that they did not bow down and worship the Golden Calf of today. And even if that great day should be some centuries away, we know that we shall all be present in better bodies with better minds, if only we have patience, fidelity, and courage now.

SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO AND NOW*

IN November, 1875,—seventeen years ago—the Inaugural Address of Col. Henry S. Olcott as President of the Theosophical Society was delivered at Mott Memorial Hall in the City of New York. The members present included a great many who have since abandoned our ranks. The spiritualists were perhaps in the majority on that day, but they soon retired. Col. Olcott remains in the same office; the Secretary of the meeting, Bro. John Storer Cobb, is yet a member in Boston; but H. P. Blavatsky, who then as afterwards was really the central figure, has for the present left this life. The first great change, then, between seventeen years ago and now is the removal from the scene of the personage who for so long was the pivot of the whole movement. The other differences are in the geographical distribution of Branch Societies, our status both in workers and means for accomplishing our work, the increase of members, and the sphere as well as the depth of the influence wielded by the Society and the literature bearing its name.

Until H. P. B. and Col. Olcott went to India in 1879 the Society was confined to New York, with a few scattered members in India and other foreign lands. The foreign diplomas and those given in America were for a long time engrossed by hand, and among the first European members were some in Corfu, Greece. But upon the advent of the two pioneers in Asia Branches sprang up there, and in England the London Lodge was started by Mr. A. P. Sinnett. For some time the centre of activity was in Asia,

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because there, in a nation which had been for centuries under the heel of a conqueror, the pioneers were working to gain its confidence in order that the influence of the mysterious and distant East might react upon the West and enable us to bring to light again important religious and philosophical truths. This reaction came, and manifesting itself first in America with full force, a host of Branches began to arise in different cities throughout the United States, until now they number over sixty, reaching to California, entering Canada and British Columbia, and running down to New Orleans.

The so-called "Coulomb *expose*" in Madras resulted in H. P. B.'s coming again to Europe, where she settled down in London and once more became, even in old age, the centre of an active propaganda. This last outburst of the same energy and force which were manifested at New York in 1875 led to the founding of the Blavatsky Lodge, now having over four-hundred members, the inclusion among the workers of such a well-known, active, and sincere woman as Annie Besant, to the foundation of many lodges throughout Europe, and at last to the formation of the European Section.

Thus in seventeen years the whole movement spread itself over the globe, with three principal official centres, in India, Europe, and America.

December, 1878, witnessed the departure of H. P. B. and Col. Olcott from New York, leaving not more than three persons who could carry on any official work here, although there were quite a number of members in the country. The movement was still so young that it was weak, but one book had appeared which was distinctively its own. That was *Isis Unveiled*. This was the forerunner of many another. Upon reaching the hospitable shores of India the two pioneers founded the *Theosophist*, which began to emit article after article from the pens of both editors as well as from those of more or less learned Hindus. In it also appeared those articles—called Fragments of Occult Truth—which were afterwards embodied in *Esoteric Buddhism*. Today, instead of having but *Isis Unveiled*, we have a long list of works all distinctively Theosophical and creating almost a new language for the needs of a very metaphysical philosophy. Humbler workers arose too on every hand. At first Damodar K. Mavalankar at the Indian Headquarters, then others in Europe and elsewhere. Today the sun never sets on the labors of those devoted men and women who in the face of every obstacle diligently work for the movement which was laughed at in 1875, so that now when the busy Theosophist lays the work aside in India it is taken up in Europe to be carried forward in New York, travelling with the light across the wide United States, until upon the Pacific Slope the band of devotees hands it over again to the lands beyond the Western sea. Yet, strange to say, this is all done without wealth but with nearly empty purses. We thus have to our hand organized Branches, smoothly working

Sections, many books to offer enquirers, pamphlets and leaflets uncountable, magazines at all the centres in English and other languages, everywhere activity and energy, while all with one accord must draw their chief inspiration from the life, the labors, and the words of that wonderful and still but faintly understood woman, Helena P. Blavatsky.

A handful of members but seventeen years ago—today enrolled friends of the movement in every land on the planet.

When the Society began its work but little attention was paid to psychical research except among the spiritualists, and that continued in a rut made some forty years before: it was profitless; it represented an immense opportunity unused. The world of science, and those whose thoughts are affected by science, thought hardly at all about the psychic nature of man. General literature was devoid of it. The great and ancient doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation were unknown to our people, all reference to them being rare and fugitive. Today the literature of the West is full of all these things, and "Theosophy" has become a word so familiar that it can be found even in our humorous publications, a sure sign that it has ceased to be unknown. When such a weekly as *Harper's* prints a column about the shrine in London for the ashes of H. P. B., illustrating it with a picture reproduced from the photograph brought from Europe by the General Secretary, we can see what extension the influence of our labors has had.

H. P. B. and her teachers declared in 1875 that the age, in the West, was about to swing back from a materialism "which enthroned scepticism while it destroyed spirituality," and an effort had to be made to furnish the only philosophy which would prevent a return to dogmatism or superstition by giving a rational explanation to the race mind now about to put questions that science is yet unable to answer and the churches had never pretended needed any reply save a reference to the mercy or the favor of God. This satisfying system of philosophy was once more brought out from its place of preservation, and today it brings comfort to many who without it would be forced to blaspheme against nature. Nothing but the influence of these doctrines could have raised up on every hand men and women who without money or hope of fame work on for the real man who is mind and not body. The sphere of influence of the Society is, then, not so much in works of a material character, where physical wants are supplied for the moment and the real man left to his own devices for the perpetuation of a civilization that breeds poverty and a criminal class, but is in the field of man's real nature, which lasts through crash of civilization or cataclysm of nature. Its depth therefore is measurable only by a plummet which touches the depths beyond today. It will be known in its entirety when the present centre of eternity shall have moved itself into the far-distant future and become a new present, a glorious reincarnation.

FROM OSTENDE TO LONDON*

A TURNING POINT IN THE T. S.

In the early months of 1887 there were some few members of the T. S. in London who felt that if Theosophy did not receive some vital impulse, the centre there would be confined to a few individuals only who were pursuing and would continue to pursue their studies. Of course there may have been many who felt the same, but I write here of those with whom I was actually in contact. There were many anxious discussions as to how a vital interest could be awakened in the truths of Theosophy, and how attention should be restored to the ethical philosophy. This was the more necessary, for in the public mind the philosophy had been inseparably connected with the phenomena. We all felt that we were working in the dark and that we were ignorant of the real basis upon which the philosophy rested. Obviously we required a leader who might intelligently direct our efforts. We then determined each separately to write to H. P. Blavatsky, who was then in Ostende, laying before the Founder of the T. S. and the Messenger of the Masters the position as each of us saw it. We asked her to reply in a collective letter giving us advice as to what to do. She replied, however, to each individual, writing letters of eight to twelve pages. The result of this was that we all wrote and asked her to come over and direct our efforts. She had told us that she was writing the *Secret Doctrine* and must finish that before undertaking other work. Nevertheless we wrote to her that there was, we believed, urgent need of her directing presence, and that she could finish the *Secret Doctrine* in London as well as or better than in Ostende. After receiving her reply, which urged objections, Mr. Bertram Keightley went over to Ostende during the latter part of February or beginning of March and talked matters over with her. She agreed to come to London at the end of April provided we would find a house for her somewhere a little out of London in which she could work in peace. Soon after he returned I went over to Ostende rather unexpectedly to myself. I naturally went to call after leaving my luggage at the hotel. Madame Blavatsky received me with the greatest kindness, although previously to that occasion I was almost unknown to her. She insisted that I should transfer my things to her house and stay with her while in Ostende. At that time she was occupying the first floor of the house, with a Swiss maid to wait on her and Countess Wachtmeister to keep

*This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in *The Path* for November, 1892.

her company. I was at once introduced to the *Secret Doctrine* with a request to read, correct, and excise, a privilege I naturally did not avail myself of. Madame Blavatsky at that time had never ventured out of her rooms since the previous November, and never came from her writing and bed-room into the dining-room until the windows had been closed and the room well warmed. Several attacks of inflammation of the kidneys had warned her that the slightest chill was dangerous to the completion of her work. At the close of my visit I returned to England with renewed assurances of her arrival on May 1st, and under pledge to return and assist Madame Blavatsky on her journey to London. I had not been in London many hours when one of our members, Dr. Ashton Ellis, received a telegram from Countess Wachtmeister saying, as I recall its tenor, that Madame Blavatsky had had another inflammatory attack on the kidneys, that she was comatose, and that her life was in the utmost danger. Dr. Ellis went over to Ostende and attended her. He told me that he was extremely surprised, and so were the others who knew her serious condition, to find her recovering in a few days. Her state then was so critical that she began arranging her affairs before the comatose attack came, burning up papers and having a will drawn up so as to be ready for the end. Later on she told me herself that her life was saved by the direct intervention of her Master. Her endurance manifested itself even at this point, for as soon as she could leave her bed she was again at work on the *Secret Doctrine*.

In the middle of April Mr. Keightley again went over, and I followed him about the 25th or 26th. We were rather in consternation because Madame Blavatsky said she could not possibly leave in such weather as then prevailed, especially on account of her late serious illness. Her landlord said she must leave, for the rooms were let. Countess Wachtmeister had previously left for Sweden to attend to urgent business affairs there under promise to rejoin Madame Blavatsky in London. Staying in the house with us was a friend of Dr. Ellis who assisted in the removal.

The fated day came, and in place of being bright but cold, as had been the case two days before, the morning proved to be cold and foggy, with a steady drizzling rain falling and penetrating all it touched, the thermometer being about 40 degrees. We fully expected Madame Blavatsky would decline to move, and thought her justified in doing so. Nevertheless she appeared that morning in full marching order, the trunks were packed, and all was ready. The carriage arrived and Madame Blavatsky was assisted into it, and off it drove to the wharf. It must be remembered that she had not had a window open in her room while she was in it (and would scarcely allow it open while she was out) for six months. She kept her room at a temperature of over 70 deg., believing that anything under that would kill her. Moreover, she was almost crippled with rheumatism and could hardly walk, and was a constant martyr to sciatica. On getting to the wharf we found the tide low, and in

consequence that there was only a narrow gangway leading at a very steep incline to the steamer's deck. Imagine our dismay. Madame Blavatsky, however, said nothing, but simply grasping the rails walked slowly and without assistance to the deck. We then took her to a cabin on deck where she sank on to the sofa and only then betrayed the pain and exhaustion caused by her effort. The journey was uneventful so far as Dover, save that for the first time in her life Mme. Blavatsky knew what the preliminary qualms of sea-sickness meant and was much puzzled. At Dover the tide was still lower, and as a result four very stalwart piermen had to carry her to the top. Then came the greatest difficulty, for the platform is low and the English railway carriage steps were high. It required the united efforts of all the party (and the piermen as well) to assist Madame Blavatsky in her crippled state into the carriage. The journey to London was uneventful, and with the help of an invalid chair and a carriage she was safely lodged in the house we had secured for her. Secretly I was afraid the journey would have serious results, but, whatever was the reason, she seemed to enjoy better health for some time after her arrival in England than she had for months previously. The day after her arrival she was at work on the *Secret Doctrine* at 7 a.m., and did not appear best pleased because she had been prevented from an earlier start through her writing materials not having been unpacked the previous night.

A. Keightley.

[Editor's Note.—Dr. Keightley was asked to give the above short account of an important point in our history. It was a turning point indeed, since it resulted in the re-awakening of the London centre. A postal card sent to the Editor by H. P. B. after she got to London may be of interest and is here given.

Addressed "W. Q. Judge Esq., Editor Path, New York, U. S. A.," postmark May 7, '89.

Maycot, Crownhill, Upper Norwood, London, *May 7th.*

Oh *thy* prophetic soul! Didn't know old H. P. B. was for seventeen days hovering between life and death; drawn irresistibly by the charm *beyond* the latter and held by her coat-tails by the Countess and some London Lodges? Nice intuitional friend. Anyhow *saved* once more, and once more stuck into the mud of life right with my classical nose. Two Keightleys and Thornton (a dear, Real new Theosophist) came to Ostende, packed me up, books, kidneys, and gouty legs, and carried me across the water partially in steamer, partially in invalid chair, and the rest in train to Norwood, in one of the cottages of which here I am, living (rather vegetating) in it till the Countess returns. Write here "1000 words for the Path"? I'll *try*, old man. Very, very seedy and weak; but rather better after the mortal disease which cleansed me if it did not carry me off. Love and sincere, as usual and for ever. Yours in heaven and hell.—'O. L.' H. P. B."]

THE MAHATMAS AS IDEALS AND FACTS*

A VISITOR from one of the other planets of the solar system who might learn the term *Mahatma* after arriving here would certainly suppose that the etymology of the word undoubtedly inspired the believers in *Mahatmas* with the devotion, fearlessness, hope, and energy which such an ideal should arouse in those who have the welfare of the human race at heart. Such a supposition would be correct in respect to some, but the heavenly visitor after examining all the members of the Theosophical Society could not fail to meet disappointment when the fact was clear to him that many of the believers were afraid of their own ideals, hesitated to proclaim them, were slothful in finding arguments to give reasons for their hope, and all because the wicked and scoffing materialistic world might laugh at such a belief.

The whole sweep, meaning, and possibility of evolution are contained in the word *Mahatma*. *Maha* is "great," *Atma* is "soul," and both compounded into one mean those great souls who have triumphed before us not because they are made of different stuff and are of some strange family, but just because they are of the human race. Reincarnation, karma, the sevenfold division, retribution, reward, struggle, failure, success, illumination, power, and a vast embracing love for man, all these lie in that single word. The soul emerges from the unknown, begins to work in and with matter, is reborn again and again, makes karma, developes the six vehicles for itself, meets retribution for sin and punishment for mistake, grows strong by suffering, succeeds in bursting through the gloom, is enlightened by the true illumination, grasps power, retains charity, expands with love for orphaned humanity, and thenceforth helps all others who remain in darkness until all may be raised up to the place with the "Father in Heaven" who is the Higher Self. This would be the argument of the visitor from the distant planet, and he in it would describe a great ideal for all members of a Society such as ours which had its first impulse from some of these very *Mahatmas*.

Without going into any argument further than to say that evolution demands that such beings should exist or there is a gap in the chain—and this position is even held by a man of science like Prof. Huxley, who in his latest essays puts it in almost as definite language as mine—this article is meant for those who believe in the existence of the *Mahatmas*, whether that faith has arisen of itself or is the result of argument. It is meant also for all classes of the believers, for they are of several varieties. Some believe without wavering; others believe unwaveringly but are afraid to tell of their belief; a few believe, yet are always thinking that they

* This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for March, 1893.

must be able to say they have set eyes on an Adept before they can infuse their belief into others; and a certain number deliberately hide the belief as a sort of individual possession which separates them from the profane mortals who have never heard of the Adepts or who having heard scoff at the notion. To all these I wish to speak. Those unfortunate persons who are ever trying to measure exalted men and sages by the conventional rules of a transition civilization, or who are seemingly afraid of a vast possibility for man and therefore deny, may be well left to themselves and to time, for it is more than likely they will fall into the general belief when it is formed as it surely will be in the course of no long time. For a belief in *Mahatmas*—whatever name you give the idea—is a common property of the whole race, and all the efforts of all the men of empirical science and dogmatic religion can never kill out the soul's own memory of its past.

We should declare our belief in the Adepts, while at the same time we demand no one's adherence. It is not necessary to give the names of any of the Adepts, for a name is an invention of a family, and but few persons ever think of themselves by name but by the phrase "I am myself." To name these beings, then, is no proof, and to seek for mystery names is to invite condemnation for profanation. The ideal without the name is large and grand enough for all purposes.

Some years ago the Adepts wrote and said to H. P. B. and to several persons that more help could be given to the movement in America because the fact of their existence was not concealed from motives of either fear or doubt. This statement of course carries with it by contradistinction the conclusion that where, from fear of schools of science or of religion, the members had not referred much to the belief in *Mahatmas*, the power to help was for some reason inhibited. This is the interesting point, and brings up the question "Can the power to help of the *Mahatmas* be for any cause inhibited?" The answer is, It can. But why?

All effects on every plane are the result of forces set in motion, and cannot be the result of nothing, but must ever flow from causes in which they are wrapped up. If the channel through which water is meant to flow is stopped up, the water will not run there, but if a clear channel is provided the current will pass forward. Occult help from Masters requires a channel just as much as any other help does, and the fact that the currents to be used are occult makes the need for a channel greater. The persons to be acted on must take part in making the channel or line for the force to act, for if we will not have it they cannot give it. Now as we are dealing with the mind and nature of man, we have to throw out the words which will arouse the ideas connected with the forces we desire to have employed. In this case the words are those which bring up the doctrine of the existence of Adepts, Mahatmas, Masters of wis-

dom. Hence the value of the declaration of our belief. It arouses dormant ideas in others, it opens up a channel in the mind, it serves to make the conducting lines for the forces to use which the *Mahatmas* wish to give out. Many a young man who could never hope to see great modern professors of science like Huxley and Tyndall and Darwin has been excited to action, moved to self-help, impelled to seek for knowledge, by having heard that such men actually exist and are human beings. Without stopping to ask if the proof of their living in Europe is complete, men have sought to follow their example. Shall we not take advantage of the same law of the human mind and let the vast power of the Lodge work with our assistance and not against our opposition or doubt or fear? Those who are devoted know how they have had unseen help which showed itself in results. Those who fear may take courage, for they will find that not all their fellow beings are devoid of an underlying belief in the possibilities outlined by the doctrine of the existence of the Adepts.

And if we look over the work of the Society we find wherever the members boldly avow their belief and are not afraid to speak of this high ideal, the interest in theosophy is awake, the work goes on, the people are benefitted. To the contrary, where there are constant doubt, ceaseless asking for material proof, incessant fear of what the world or science or friends will think, there the work is dead, the field is not cultivated, and the town or city receives no benefit from the efforts of those who while formally in a universal brotherhood are not living out the great ideal.

Very wisely and as an occultist, Jesus said his followers must give up all and follow him. We must give up the desire to save ourselves and acquire the opposite one,—the wish to save others. Let us remember the story in ancient writ of Arjuna, who, entering heaven and finding that his dog was not admitted and some of his friends in hell, refused to remain and said that while one creature was out of heaven he would not enter it. This is true devotion, and this joined to an intelligent declaration of belief in the great initiation of the human race will lead to results of magnitude, will call out the forces that are behind, will prevail against hell itself and all the minions of hell now striving to retard the progress of the human soul.

Eusebio Urban.

SOME OLD QUESTIONS ANSWERED*

A correspondent from New York writes:

. . . . . "The Editors of LUCIFER would confer a great benefit on those who are attracted to the movement which they advocate, if they would state:

"(1.) Whether a would-be-theosophist-occultist is required to abandon his worldly ties and duties such as family affection, love of parents, wife, children, friends, etc.?

"I ask this question because it is rumoured here that some theosophical publications have so stated, and would wish to know whether such a *sine qua non* condition really exists in your Rules? The same, however, is found in the New Testament. 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me, etc., etc.' is said in Matthew (x. 37). Do the MASTERS of Theosophy demand as much?

"Yours in the Search of Light,

"L. M. C."

This is an old, old question, and a still older charge against theosophy, started first by its enemies. We emphatically answer, No; adding that no *theosophical* publication could have rendered itself guilty of such a FALSEHOOD and calumny. No follower of theosophy, least of all a disciple of the "Masters of Theosophy" (the *chela* of a *guru*), would ever be accepted on such conditions. Many were the candidates, but "few the chosen." Dozens were refused, simply because married and having a sacred duty to perform to wife and children.[1] None have ever been asked to forsake father or mother; for he who, being necessary to his parent for his support, leaves him or her to gratify his own selfish consideration or thirst for knowledge, however great and sincere, *is "unworthy"* of the Science of Sciences, "or ever to approach a holy MASTER."

Our correspondent must surely have confused in his mind Theosophy with Roman Catholicism, and Occultism with the dead-letter teachings of the Bible. For it is only in the Latin Church that it has become a meritorious action, which is called serving God and Christ, to "abandon father and mother, wife and children," and every duty of an honest man and citizen, in order to become a monk. And it is in St. Luke's Gospel that one reads the terrible words, put in the mouth of Jesus: "If any *man* come to me, and *hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters,* yea, *his own life* also, HE CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE." (xiv. 26.)

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*This correspondence was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for December, 1887.

[1] We know but two cases of *married* "chelas" being accepted; but both these were Brahmins and had *child-wives*, according to Hindu custom, and they were *Reformers* more than *chelas*, trying to abrogate child-marriage and slavery. Others had to obtain the consent of their wives before entering the "Path," as is usual in India since long ages.

Saint (?) Jerome teaches, in one of his writings, "If thy father lies down across thy threshold, if thy mother uncovers to thine eyes the bosom which suckled thee, *trample on thy father's lifeless body,* Trample on Thy Mother's Bosom, and *with eyes unmoistened and dry, fly to the Lord, who calleth thee!*"

Surely then, it is not from any *theosophical* publication that our correspondent could have learnt such an infamous charge against theosophy and its Masters—but rather in some *anti-Christian,* or *too* dogmatically "Christian" paper.

Our society has never been "more Catholic than the Pope." It has done its best to follow out the path prescribed by the Masters; and if it has failed in more than one respect to fulfil its arduous task, the blame is certainly not to be thrown on either Theosophy, nor its Masters, but on the limitations of human nature. The *Rules,* however, of *chelaship,* or discipleship, are there, in many a Sanskrit and Tibetan volume. In Book IV. of *Kiu-ti,* in the chapter on *"the Laws of Upasans"* (disciples), the qualifications expected in a "regular *chela*" are: (1.) Perfect physical health.[1] (2.) Absolute mental and physical purity. (3.) Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings. (4.) Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the laws of Karma. (5.) A courage undaunted in the support of truth, even in face of peril to life. (6.) An intuitive perception of one's being the vehicle of the manifested divine *Atman* (spirit). (7.) Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of, everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world. (8.) Blessing of both parents[2] and *their permission to become an Upasan* (chela); and (9.) Celibacy, and freedom from any obligatory duty."

The two last rules are most strictly enforced. No man *convicted of disrespect to his father or mother,* or *unjust abandonment of his wife,* can ever be accepted even as a *lay chela.*

This is sufficient, it is hoped. We have heard of chelas who, having *failed,* perhaps in consequence of the neglect of some such duty, for one or another reason, have invariably thrown the blame and responsibility for it on the teaching of the Masters. This is but natural in poor and weak human beings who have not even the courage to recognise their own mistakes, or the rare nobility of publicly confessing them, but are always trying to find a scapegoat. Such we pity, and leave to the Law of Retribution, or Karma. It is not these weak creatures, who can ever be expected to have the best of the enemy described by the wise Kiratarjuniya of Bharavi:—

> "The enemies which rise within the body,
> Hard to be overcome—the evil passions—
> Should manfully be fought, *who conquers these*
> *Is equal to the conqueror of worlds.*" (xi. 32.)
>
> [ED.]

[1] This rule 1 applies only to the "temple chelas," who must be *perfect.*
[2] Or one, if the other is dead.

ON THE LOOKOUT

It would be asking too much to expect that the Jewish communities should refrain from pointing the moral and adorning the tale of the European war or from asking what Christianity has actually done for the world now intent upon murder, wholesale, and by the most improved machinery. Thus we find the *American Hebrew* drawing attention to the fact that "The Christian church or the Christian churches—more probably Christianity itself—has proven ineffectual and meaningless in the spiritual crisis." It is, says the writer, an amazing spectacle. Eight separate Christian nations are bombarding—and the word is a timely one—the throne of grace for divine aid in destroying their respective enemies, and they are doing this on the assumption that the God of Peace will naturally and necessarily be on their side as soon as his attention has been adequately drawn to the facts. Says the *American Hebrew*:—"The Church has failed. Throughout the centuries, Christianity has spoken of peace, but nowhere in Christian teachings has there been found effective examples of the peace spirit since the death of its great founder. As an institution it has been the right hand of war, ministering words of comfort to the dying soldier, but never standing firmly for the ideals of peace in moments of crisis. The Christian world remains barbaric. The teachings of Christianity have not penetrated."

But the frankness of this Jewish criticism is surpassed by the condemnation that comes from some definite Christian sources. Thus we find an outspoken letter in the New York *Evening Post* from the Rev. G. Monroe Royce, Rector of St. Thomas Church of New Windsor-on-Hudson, in which the utter failure of Christianity is distinctly asserted. Says Mr. Royce. "But one has a right to expect that after nineteen hundred years of civilization calling itself Christian, the Church and her ministers should have influence enough, power—downright moral and spiritual power—enough to prevent the savage, the brute instincts of mankind dominating not only kings and other rulers, but the whole body of people composing the nations of Europe. This much we have a right to insist upon, and if the combined influence of all organized Christianity cannot bring about such a result, then it is, I think, perfectly fair to conclude that the church machinery has broken down: that it does not do what it professes to do, and is not worthy the support it is receiving." But Mr. Royce reserves his more practical suggestion for his last paragraph, a suggestion whose practical adoption might be viewed with some equanimity. He says:—"Let us tell these popes, patriarchs, bishops, churches and missionary societies that if they cannot prevent such direful carnage, such a universal outrage upon humanity, we refuse to contribute one penny to their support. The stock exchanges throughout the world have frankly confessed their inability to deal with the situation and have closed their doors. If the churches possessed the same candor, they would do likewise."

But recriminations will neither assuage bitternesses nor heal wounds. It is the part of wisdom to look upon destruction as but the prelude to construction, and so to seize whatever opportunities may present themselves from the burning of much stubble and the removal of much theological rubbish. For indeed the stubble and the rubbish are in a fair way to disappear, and we may find in the near future that religious dogmatism is less sure of itself than of yore, and more disposed to those heart searchings from which many good things may emerge. Christianity having carefully expunged whatever of Theosophy it once possessed—no small measure—may now realize that it threw overboard the cargo while preserving the ballast, and that it owes its present humiliation to its abandonment of the distinctive Theosophical teachings that it once avowed but that were found to be inconsistent with priestly ambitions and a consistent desire to serve two masters

in spite of high authority for the certainty that such a thing cannot be done. If the churches had continued to teach the science of life, the continuity of consciousness, the persistent reincarnation of all life in the search for experience, and the individual responsibility that is the necessary and obvious corollary of such a teaching, the present horrors would have been impossible in the light of a human fraternity that would have gradually submerged the brute in man and exalted the God. If Theosophists all over the world are now awake to the situation they will reassert the first principles of their philosophy with an energy that will command attention.

It is to be feared that we shall have to wait some time before receiving copies or even further accounts of the important book on Materializations lately published in Germany by Professor von Schrenk-Notzing. In the meantime we are supplied with some cursory information concerning it by *Current Opinion* which says that this eminent physician who has written important treatises on criminal psychology and spent years in psychical research seems now to have abandoned his impression that ghosts are a sort of self-deception or the product of an obscure faculty of the imagination. His experimental investigations have now been carried on for some years. They were conducted with the aid of powerful cameras and in the presence of many trained observers. Every test which the rigidly scientific mind could devise seems to have been applied in the effort to preclude deception or error. As a result the learned professor has now reached the conclusion that the "phenomena of materialization" are an "objective fact in science," although the cause of these manifestations still eludes him.

These further reports from Germany seem to have stimulated Dr. J. Godfrey Raupert of London to a renewed protest, although, it is to be feared, an unavailing one. Dr. Raupert has already attracted some attention by his warnings of the dangers attending nearly every variety of practical psychical research and his warnings have been recorded in these pages. His medical practice has brought him into contact with numbers of persons suffering from obscure nervous maladies, in nearly every case directly traceable to reckless dabbling in the minor occult forces that has now become a fashionable sensation throughout English society. If science, says Dr. Raupert, is now to popularise these still more serious experiments in materializations we may expect still more serious results upon those equipped neither physically, mentally nor ethically for such a practice. That his presentiments are not peculiar to himself is evidenced by a quotation from Professor Lombroso who paid special attention to the results upon the medium, and who says that after the seance the medium is overcome by morbid sensitiveness, hyperaesthesia, photophobia, and often by hallucinations and delirium during which she asks to be watched from harm. There were serious disturbances of digestion, followed by vomiting if she had eaten before the seance. There seemed to be also true paralysis of the legs on account of which she must be carried and undressed by others. These morbid states, says Professor Lombroso, may be observed and verified in all true mediums. Professor Schrenk-Notzing himself confesses to these disastrous consequences to the medium. He says:—"While the phenomena under investigation were in progress, the medium, a woman, groaned and trembled. When she was restored to normal consciousness after the sitting, which lasted for fully an hour and a half on this occasion, she was in a state of absolute exhaustion. In addition to her feeling of exhaustion was the fact that she spoke in a very hoarse voice and coughed a great deal. As a general thing it was two days before the medium recovered from the state of nervous prostration induced by the experiences she went through."

But it is to be feared that the sufferings of the medium are not likely to weigh heavily in the balances against a scientific curiosity that has never yet been restrained by moral considerations. Nor is it likely that any attention will be given to the inevitable disaster that must overtake the casual investigator who is persuaded into these evil paths by idle curiosity or by

the love of sensationalism that is a concomitant of modern luxury and its jaded appetites.

The *Review of Reviews* expresses some surprise at the persistence of interest in the "myth" of Atlantis. Science has already shaken its head in grave disapproval of the earlier attempts to prove the existence of a pre-historic continent and a pre-historic civilization, but in spite of the finality that should attend a scientific denial there are still hardy spirits who not only rake over the evidence already available but actually presume to add to it. We are told that a writer in a recent number of *Cosmos* marshals a series of observations made by naturalists upon the fauna and flora, present and fossil, of the island archipelagoes lying to the west and southwest of the Spanish peninsula, in an effort to show that new evidence of a striking character has been brought forward in support of the Atlantic tradition. Very recently L. Germain has examined the matter from the standpoint of the zoologist (*"Le Probleme de l'Atlandide et la Zoologic"*: *Annales de Geographie* 1913). It is well known, he says, that tradition testifies to the existence of a continent in the equatorial Atlantic, and to the fact that this continent was overwhelmed at the very beginning of historic times. After having been long ago relegated to the category of myths, this "curious Greek tradition" has taken a new lease of life, and we are today almost in a position to locate the continent in the region of the Cape Verde islands. M. Germain then proceeds to a somewhat lengthy examination of the zoological facts bearing upon the contention, and he concludes, first, that the island groups of the Atlantic were at one time united in a single continent corresponding to the traditional Atlantis, and, second, that this continent was connected on one side with Morocco and Portugal and must have had for a southern boundary a shore line which began in the neighborhood of the Cape Verde islands and ended at some point, as yet not capable of exact determination, on the American continent,—probably Venezuela.

We need not stay to examine the learned author's geographical conclusions, but it may none the less be pointed out with profit that here we have one more example of the unembarrassed placidity with which science ignores its most positive and dogmatic conclusions but without explanation or apology to the actual pioneers upon its new path of research. Once more science confesses that it has misled the world by an arrogant assumption of knowledge that actually was no more than guesswork founded upon prejudice and ignorance.

The reaction against the fetich of heredity began when Weismann demonstrated the non-transmissibility of acquired characteristics. The reaction seems likely to become a revolution when we observe the vigor of the attack now being directed against eugenics and the associated follies of those who would turn the teachings of Galton and his school into a religion. The latest to enter the lists is Mr. Mowry Saben who devotes one of the essays in his newly published book "The Spirit of Life" (Mitchell Kennerley, $1.50 net) to what he calls "The Superstition of Heredity." The popular notion of heredity, he says, makes of one's parentage a pair of creators but "no creator can create anything greater than himself," and a pair of creators can create nothing greater than themselves. Mr. Havelock Ellis, after admitting that none of Carlyle's ancestors ever showed any capacity for authorship, says that Carlyle wrote "just as they would have written if they had been able to write." But how, asks Mr. Saben, did Mr. Ellis make this truly astounding discovery? How indeed is it possible to know that a person who never has done a given thing would do a given thing in a certain way if he did it at all? Evidently Mr. Ellis does not know what he is talking about. It might have occurred to him that a man who was the son and grandson of peasants and yet was able to use more words than any other British author, save one, presents in himself a rather startling phenomenon. Mr. Saben concludes that "the notion that a man is created by his parents is the most mythical of all myths."

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